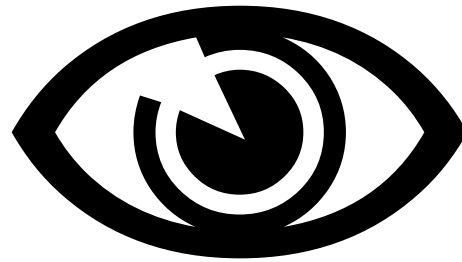




# *Effective Strategies for Teaching in the Digital Age*



AEJMC e-book edited by  
**Debashis “Deb” Aikat,**  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



*Teaching Committee*



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## Foreword

# Effective Strategies for Teaching in the Digital Age

The Internet was spawned as ARPAnet in 1969 by a Pentagon doomsday plan to keep U. S. military computers operating in the event of a nuclear war. The power of the Internet was unleashed in the 1990s by a special application, the World Wide Web, so called for its global reach of retrieving and accessing digital information. The Internet drives the hottest stocks on Wall Street, shapes technological innovation, and fills the pages of the world's presses. Internet growth and other digital developments have transformed society. What does this mean for journalism and mass communication education? How will this affect the way we live, work, learn, and communicate?

This e-book was prepared for the workshop on “Effective Strategies for Teaching in the Digital Age” sponsored by the AEJMC’s Committee on Teaching at the AEJMC conference in Saint Louis. With lively discussions and a mentor meet-up, this interactive workshop features proven strategies for effective teaching and developing mentoring relationships.

This e-book provides a treasure trove of information, ideas, strategies, trends and wisdom that are relevant across the repertoire of our field. In preparing this e-book, I asked our distinguished panelists, my cherished colleagues on the AEJMC Teaching Committee and renowned scholars to perpetuate in print their ideas, tips and perspectives in a “Top Ten” list of wisdom points. Despite their busy summer (yes, relaxing summers are a myth!), our authors were generous with their time and energy. Their response was overwhelming and, for me, editing this e-book became an enriching experience.

This workshop marked a three-year pilot plan based on the “strategic directions” outlined by the AEJMC 2009 State of the Discipline report <[http://www.aejmc.org/\\_about/discipline/index.php](http://www.aejmc.org/_about/discipline/index.php)>. It addressed four objectives: (i) Examine what we teach, how we teach and allay anxieties about a discipline in transition; (ii) Adapt course content to the new realities of communication and draw upon core values; (iii) Harness research, creative and professional activity, media and industry support, professional organizations and community resources to incorporate curriculum changes, technology innovations and assessment of learning outcomes; and (iv) Develop peer-to-peer and co-mentoring relationships.

The workshop speakers include renowned educators, students, winners of the Scripps Howard Journalism Administrator of the Year and Scripps Howard Journalism Teacher of the Year awards and experts who will celebrate and critique teaching in its current state and style. They will cover other important issues such as: motivating the 21st Century student, assessment of learning outcomes, grade inflation, student evaluations of teaching, student apathy and related issues in an age of entitlement, research resources to enhance teaching,

and the use of online tools and social media for effective teaching.

The workshop speakers featured winners of the Scripps Howard Journalism Administrator of the Year and Scripps Howard Journalism Teacher of the Year awards, renowned educators, and students who will celebrate and critique teaching in its current state and style. They covered ways to incorporate assessment of learning outcomes, grade inflation, student evaluations of teaching, student apathy and related issues in an age of entitlement, research resources to enhance teaching, and the use of online tools and social media for effective teaching.

Workshop participants will be paired with individual mentors and will receive a Teaching Handbook of take-home tips, readings and resources to use throughout the year. The workshop (see attached schedule) will cover four parts: Part I: Effective Teaching Strategies; Part II: “Shoulda, Coulda, Mighta, Woulda”: Exchange of Teaching Strategies and Ideas; and Part III: Proven Ways to Flourish in Academe: A Mentoring Plan to Balance Teaching, Research, Service and Life; and Part IV: “Magnanimous Mentor” program. The workshop also will focus on career-advancement strategies: developing a dossier for tenure, promotion and continuing professional and scholarly development, as well as tips for balancing research, teaching, service and life.

I am grateful to Jennifer H. McGill, AEJMC, for helping us host this workshop, Rich Burke, AEJMC, for accounting support, Kysh Brown, AEJMC and Chris Neiger, AEJMC, for spreading the word through cyberspace. I also thank the entire AEJMC staff for their help and support.

If you wish to see some issues covered in future workshops, please share your ideas with members of the AEJMC Teaching Committee (see list below). Thanks for your participation in this important initiative.



Deb Aikat, North Carolina at Chapel Hill <da@unc.edu>  
Past Chair (2009-2010) of AEJMC Teaching Committee



**Teaching Committee Elected Members (2010-11): Sheri Broyles** (Chair), University of North Texas | **Jennifer Greer** (Vice-Chair), University of Alabama | **Linda Aldoory**, University of Maryland, College Park | **Marianne Barrett**, Arizona State University | **Bonnie Brownlee**, Indiana University | **Charles Davis**, University of Missouri | **Amy Falkner**, Syracuse University | **Birgit Wassmuth**, Kennesaw State University.

## Workshop Schedule

### “Effective Strategies for Teaching in the Digital Age”

**Tuesday, August 9, 2011**

**1 pm to 6 pm / Session 011 of 2011 AEJMC National Conference in Saint Louis**

**Meeting Room: Landmark 5/Conference Plaza** [see map at

<http://m.guidebookapp.com/77/map/512/>]

St. Louis Renaissance Grand and Suites Hotel, 800 Washington Avenue, Saint Louis, MO 63101 |

#### ***Workshop Session: Effective Strategies for Teaching in the Digital Age***

Do you wish to pick the brains of leading educators in journalism and mass communication? With lively discussions and a mentor meet-up, this interactive workshop will cover proven strategies for effective teaching using electronic and digital technology. You'll leave this session armed with innovative teaching tips, as well as an individual mentor and a Teaching Handbook packed with readings and resources to use throughout the year. While the workshop will focus on helping those new to academe, experienced educators are welcome to participate and contribute.

#### *Moderating/Presiding:*

**Debashis “Deb” Aikat**, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Scripps Howard Foundation Journalism Teacher of the Year 2003

**Linda Aldoory**, Maryland-College Park, and

**Charles Davis**, Missouri-Columbia, Scripps Howard Journalism Teacher of the Year 2008

1 – 1:15 p.m.

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

1:15 to 2:30 p.m.

#### **Part I: Effective Teaching Strategies**

With inspiring stories and an array of individual insights, panelists will begin this interactive session with brief remarks about the challenges and joys of teaching. Participants will share their teaching tips and discuss effective teaching.

#### *Panelists:*

Teaching Millennials: Tough Love, Social Media, and Selective Self-Disclosure

**Bey-Ling Sha**, San Diego State

Criticism and Celebration of Teaching at the University Level

**Jonathan Ernst**, undergraduate student at Saint Louis University and editor of *The University News*, student-run newspaper at Saint Louis University

Student-Teacher Communication: How to Demonstrate Passion While Also Communicating Standards.

**Charles Davis**, Missouri-Columbia, Scripps Howard Journalism Teacher of the Year 2008

Ten Traits (and Practices) of Successful Teaching in J-Schools

**Elizabeth “Bess” Menousek**, BA graduate (May 2011) in Communication and Theology, Saint Louis University

Teaching Effectively: Reaching the 21st Century Student

**Michael Gulledge**, undergraduate student at Missouri State University and photo editor of *The Standard*, Missouri State's student newspaper

2:30 to 2:45 p.m.: Break

2:45 – 4:00 p.m.:

**Part II: “Shoulda, Coulda, Mighta, Woulda”: Exchange of Teaching Strategies and Ideas**

**Panelists and workshop participants will engage in an open** exchange of teaching ideas and tips for balancing research, teaching, service and life. Send your ideas and questions to Debashis “Deb” Aikat, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, at da@unc.edu by August 4, 2011.

Using Technology Inside and Outside the Classroom to Enrich the Learning Experience

**Lori Clithero**, Apple Inc.

Deadline Pedagogy: Tools and Practices for Teaching Real-world, Real-Time Reporting

**Fred Bayles**, Boston University Statehouse Program

Best of Times, Worst of Times: Grade Inflation, Student Apathy, Achievement Anxiety and Students' Increased Sense of Entitlement

**Debashis “Deb” Aikat**, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Scripps Howard Foundation **Journalism Teacher of the Year 2003**

4:00 to 4:15 p.m.: Break

4:15 to 5:30 p.m.:

**Part III: Proven Ways to Flourish in Academe: A Mentoring Plan to Balance Teaching, Research, Service and Life**

With amazing anecdotes and astute advice, panelists will share proven ways to flourish in academe. They will discuss varying expectations for earning tenure and promotion and how to manage career advancement. Participants will discuss academic expectations and mentoring issues.

*Panelists:*

Great Expectations: Hidden Aspects of Promotion and Tenure

**Will Norton**, Mississippi, Scripps Howard Journalism Administrator of the Year 2004

Proven Ways to Flourish in Academe: Varying Expectations for Earning Tenure, Promotion and Career Advancement for All Ranks

**Gail F. Baker**, Nebraska Omaha

Mentoring for Teaching, Research and Service: Varying Environments, Expectations and Realities

**Maria Marron**, Central Michigan

5:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

**“Magnanimous Mentor” program**

Through an interactive networking process, participants will be paired with individual mentors to form mentoring connections during the year.

**6:00 p.m.: End of workshop**

## **Top Ten Tips for Teaching Millennials: Tough Love, Social Media, and Selective Self-Disclosure**

❖ By **Bey-Ling Sha**

1. Treat all students with respect
2. Remember that students have lives outside your classroom
3. Articulate standards and expectations explicitly
4. Model the high standards you expect of your students
5. Explain rationale behind your teaching choices
6. Be familiar with social and technological trends
7. Get a Facebook page
8. Set up a Twitter account
9. Offer an integrated, holistic persona
10. Maintain professional discretion

❖ Bey-Ling Sha, Ph.D., APR, is an associate professor in the School of Journalism & Media Studies at San Diego State University. She has won awards for teaching, research, and professional practice. She won the 2007 Outstanding Faculty Award from San Diego State University, and she was named the 2004 Outstanding Faculty of the Year at the University of Maryland, College Park. Dr. Sha was named the 2007 Professional of the Year by the San Diego chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. Her pro bono public relations work won the 2010 Outstanding Advocacy Award from the National Parent Teacher Association.

## 10 Tips to Effectively Engage Students

❖ By Jonathan Ernst

1. **Identify** - Gather information about the students you are teaching. Who are these students? What are their interests? How do they learn? To send a proper message, you need to first identify your audience. Ask questions and take the time to build a working relationship.
2. **Collaborate** – The educational process is a journey. Make sure to guide the students and lead them through the material. Try to avoid telling them information and focus more on personal engagement. Think of how you can work with your students to create an open learning environment.
3. **Engage** – Ask questions and force students to think about the material. Make the classroom a place for conversation. Use activities and interact with the students so that they can interact with the material. Students learn more if they are critically thinking about the course topics and applying them.
4. **Apply**- Students will shut down if they are presented with too much material in a given class period. Try to focus on the key topics and apply them to real life situations. Make sure the students realize the importance of what they are learning. Tell them your experiences, bring in a speaker and show them how this information has changed your life.
5. **Show Weakness** – You weren't always an expert. Don't forget that you are human and mistakes happen. If you act like you are smarter than your students, they will shut down and talk behind your back. Don't limit the learning experience by dominating discussions or touting your intelligence. Students are not just a way to make money in between your research; they are assisting you in learning more about your field.
6. **Be Patient** – Always remember that you are still a student. Even though you may hold the highest degree in your field, it doesn't mean that you know everything. Seek knowledge from your students and make an attempt to listen to their thoughts and ideas. Each student will work at a different pace; a great teacher caters the material to the students. Pace yourself and don't get frustrated, every student has something to bring to the classroom. It is your job to engage them and show them how to interact with the material.
7. **Use Multiple Learning Styles** – All students learn differently. It is important to cater to all learning styles by using different methods during a course. Some students learn the material by reading, some learn from listening and some learn by experiencing.
8. **Encourage** – Ask a lot from your students. Give them the tools to succeed and encourage them to use those tools. Students respond well to encouragement and support. Make yourself available and encourage students to talk with you.
9. **Show your passion** – You must have a reason for being a professor. Don't be afraid to show your students why you care about the field. Students want to hear your views and your stories.



- 10. Check up on students** – Just because you don't have them in class anymore doesn't mean they ever stop being your student. Continue to mentor and encourage students. Always be open to lighting their way and guiding them to a career.



**Jonathan D. Ernst**

Jonathan Ernst is a senior at Saint Louis University studying Communication and Environmental Studies. He serves as the Editor-in-Chief of the campus newspaper, *The University News* and is a summer intern at the *St. Louis Beacon*.

Jonathan has studied journalism in and out of the classroom since 2005. Before becoming Editor-in-Chief, Jonathan served as a News Editor and Copy Editor with *The University News*. He has reported on a multitude of areas including race, research, development, disasters, student government, student activates and crime. This past year, SLU awarded him with its exemplary achievement award for his commitment to community media.

As an environmental studies major, Jonathan enjoys reporting on environmental topics including hazards and renewable energy. At the *St. Louis Beacon*, Jonathan reports for the science beat, covering research, exploration and renewable energy news in the St. Louis region. When he graduates in May of 2012, Jonathan hopes to find work in the fields of journalism or public relations.

In the fall, Jonathan was interviewed on the NPR show On Point with Tom Ashbrook in regards to the future of college education in America. Jonathan has taken several communications courses at SLU and has always supported an active student learning experience.

<http://www.thejonathanernst.com/>

<http://www.unewsonline.com/>

<http://www.stlbeacon.org/>

<http://onpoint.wbur.org/2011/02/01/stress-college>

## **All I Know About Teaching, I Learned From....**

❖ By **Charles Davis**

1. Watching the Masters: The very first thing I'd do, were I beginning to teach again, is what I did when I got to Mizzou: go on a teaching road show!
2. Realizing How Important Hands-On Learning Really Is
3. Learning to Join Them, And Not To Fight Them
4. Thinking Constantly About Who I Am (and AM NOT), What I Can Do, And What I Was Like As a 19-Year-Old
5. Owning My Space
6. While Understanding That I Am A Teacher, Not A Parent...or a Friend...BUT A Human Being
7. Realizing That Every Day Is Not An "A" Day
8. Violating Just About Every "Rule" of Pedagogy
9. Coming To Grips With Modernity
10. Understanding that Passion Trumps Everything Else!
11. Socrates...Who Knew What He Was Doing
12. Digressing. Early and Often.

■ **Charles Davis**, Missouri-Columbia, Scripps Howard Journalism Teacher of the Year 2008

## A Bit about Me



CHARLES N. DAVIS is an associate professor at the Missouri School of Journalism and works on a half-time appointment in the Office of the Provost as a Facilitator of Mizzou Advantage, an interdisciplinary networking and development initiative launched in the spring of 2010.

Davis' scholarly research focuses on access to governmental information and media law. He has published in law reviews and scholarly journals on issues ranging from federal and state freedom of information laws to libel law, privacy and broadcast regulation. He has earned a Sunshine Award from the Society of Professional Journalists for his work in furthering freedom of information and the University of Missouri-Columbia Provost's Award for Outstanding Junior Faculty Teaching, as well as the Faculty-Alumni Award. In 2008, Davis was named the Scripps Howard Foundation National Journalism Teacher of the Year. In 2010, he was awarded the John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award from the National Press Club.

Davis has been a primary investigator for a research grant from the James S. and John L. Knight Foundation for NFOIC and another from the Rockefeller Family Fund for the study of homeland security and freedom of information issues.

Davis worked for newspapers and as a US national correspondent for a Dublin-based news wire service for financial publications, Davis reported on banking, the emerging world of e-commerce and regulatory issues for seven years before leaving full-time journalism in 1993. He completed a master's degree from the University of Georgia's Henry W. Grady School of Journalism and Mass Communication and earned a doctorate in mass communication from the University of Florida in 1995. He received his bachelor's degree from North Georgia College. Davis participates in numerous professional organizations, including the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the Society of Professional Journalists and Investigative Reporters and Editors.

## Ten Traits of Successful Teaching in J-School

❖ By Elizabeth “Bess” Menousek

I am very humbled to have this opportunity to share my thoughts with all of you. Teachers have very difficult jobs, and I am grateful to each of you for taking on this important vocation. It is a job I know I could not do, and so it is an honor for me to offer you my perspective on teaching. As far as I know, there is no magic formula to successful teaching. Every subject, every teacher, and every student uniquely affects the formula. As such, I don't expect my suggestions to make you a perfect professor. I do, however, hope that they help you view your own teaching style differently and discover more effective ways to successfully teach your student.

Here is my list of ten traits of successful teaching in journalism schools:

1. **Enthusiasm:** A teacher's enthusiasm can make or break a class; when a teacher lacks enthusiasm, even the most interesting subject becomes boring. But, an enthusiastic teacher can make the most uninteresting class the highlight of the students' weeks.
2. **Interaction:** Make it a team effort. Successful professors encourage students to take responsibility for their education and for that of their peers.
3. **Clear Goals:** Clearly defined goals help students focus on the material rather than trying to assume or discern the professor's expectations.
4. **Flexibility:** Goals are great, but students don't mind bending them. If a better opportunity for the students to learn arises, take it.
5. **Accountability:** Students are the only people who can truly give you feedback on your teaching abilities. Successful professors are open to their students' feedback and even seek it.
6. **High expectations:** Students “like” easy professors, but they love professors who push them to succeed.
7. **Clear Expectations:** Students appreciate being challenged, but they don't appreciate being set up to fail. Successful professors express expectations and set up their students to achieve them.
8. **Generous praise:** Journalism classes require students to develop skills they are not used to practicing. Students are not always going to be good at them. Successful professors are generous with praise so that their students have the courage to keep practicing.
9. **Skill orientation:** Successful professors teach their students how to learn. Students are not likely to remember specific facts long after the class is finished. Skills, however, transfer to other areas of their lives and truly benefit the students in the long run.
10. **Collaborative:** One of the most important professional skills I strengthened in college was my ability to collaborate. Journalism students are likely to enter creative fields, and a key component to creativity is collaboration.

As previously stated, each professor is unique. It is my hope that you can use these suggestions in a way that works for your unique teaching style.

**Elizabeth “Bess” Menousek**

Saint Louis University BA Communication, 2011



Elizabeth “Bess” Menousek is a recent Summa Cum Laude graduate of Saint Louis University with a BA in communication.

As a freshman, Menousek was uncertain of what she wanted to study, but thanks to some helpful guidance was lead to the communication department. Through her classes and extracurricular activities, she truly discovered her passion in communication.

Menousek engaged in a variety of areas in communication both in and out of the classroom including traditional media by hosting an on-campus radio show and serving on the advisory board for the University News (the campus newspaper) marketing by interning with Stephen Ministries, and interpersonal communication by serving as a Student Ambassador as well as a Freshman Orientation Leader.

Currently, Menousek works as a Social Media Strategist at The Clix Group, a marketing agency in St. Louis. She enjoys working in a growing and ever changing field and cannot wait to see what life has in store for her.

## Teaching Effectively: Reaching the 21st Century Student

❖ By Michael Gullledge

1. **Care about your students.** No one wants to be somewhere that they're not wanted. While being tough is important, showing that you care about your students by answering questions, listening to opinions and learning their names go a long way.
2. **Incorporate technology.** The Internet is here to stay – try and find ways to incorporate it into your classes, no matter what they may be.
3. **Provide timely feedback.** There's nothing worse than not knowing where you stand in a class. The most liked professors tend to give back stories and grades before the next assignment is due. This allows students make adjustments and improve.
4. **Try and give a roadmap for the semester.** If it's possible, having key dates on a syllabus can really help students plan ahead. If the course prevents prior date setting, try and keep students up to date on your plans.
5. **Don't be the professor that bans laptops or tablets.** Some students use laptops to take and organize notes. Others use them for Facebook. Let students reap the rewards or consequences for their actions.
6. **Give a real world experience.** Try to find ways to get students to go out and take pictures, conduct interviews of all types and just talk to people outside of class.
7. **Encourage discussion.** You have a wealth of experience and knowledge – let students ask questions and try and draw from your experiences!
8. **Have in-class workshops.** Having the first experience of deadline stress in the classroom is a lot better than when a paper has to get out. Also having the ability to ask questions and work together helps to build teamwork skills.
9. **Bring in guests.** Former students or working journalists can be interesting to occasionally bring into class. It can give another perspective to what you have been trying to convey.
10. **Teach the essence of journalism.** There's a lot of really good and really bad journalism out there. Teach and discuss what journalism really is about. Is it really the “first draft of history?” *Why* is it important to get the news out with the facts absolutely correct? What is the long-term impact of a journalist's work? That's what it's all about.



Michael Gulledge is the photo editor of *The Standard* at Missouri State University in Springfield, Mo. He is seeking an undergraduate degree in computer information systems with a minor in journalism. His interests are in convergence journalism. He is a member of the Honors College and is a Board of Governors scholarship recipient. Gulledge placed first in news photography and third in sports photography in division one at the Missouri College Media Association's 2011 conference. He served as a photographer for *The Standard* from 2009 until he became photo editor this year. Outside of Missouri State, Gulledge works as a consultant to Francis Howell High School in St. Charles, Mo. where he assists with online media, photography and yearbook production. He has also interned in information technology at AT&T, Inc. and MasterCard, Inc.

## Top 10 Tips for Teaching on Deadline

❖ By Fred Bayles

Teaching students the demands of reporting and writing/producing on deadline is a challenge for journalism professors.

Past instruction relied on classroom simulations with the instructor presenting facts, details and perhaps scripted statements by hypothetical spokespersons and eyewitnesses. Another model sent students out to news conferences, trials and other public events with an assignment to come back with a story. Such work could be reviewed and graded at a leisurely, considered pace by the instructor.

Over the years a number of journalism programs created semi-professional coursework, such as Northwestern's Medill Washington and Chicago news services, the University of Maryland news service and Boston University's Washington and Statehouse Programs to name a few. More recently - with the advent of the Web and the decline in professional newsroom populations – a growing number of programs are developing media partnerships that use student work on the news organizations' websites.

Although these agreements offer the student a terrific opportunity to develop a portfolio and a working relationship with news professionals, the instructors must adjust to the rigors of deadline speed and accuracy while maintaining pedagogical values.

Here are 10 tips for deadline pedagogy:

1. **Communication:** It is essential for students to stay in touch throughout the day with updates on their stories. This helps the instructor guide their reporting and allows for effective triage of stories as deadlines approach.
2. **Expectations:** Students need to know what is expected of them at the beginning of the semester. Requirements for deadlines, style, and length of stories should be made clear on the first day of class.
3. **Systems:** Find a file sharing program such as Google Docs or Adobe Buzzword that will allow you and your students to review their stories in real time when they may be in a different location.
4. **Explain** the changes you are making and why they need to go back and answer questions in their story. Working side-by-side (even in a virtual way) can be one of the strongest methods of teaching in this environment.
5. **Patience:** Time demands can frazzle nerves, especially when a student has turned in copy that needs work. They are usually trying their best; try to keep your tone collegial.
6. **Be Tough When Needed:** Students need to know that making the same mistake over and over won't be smiled upon in the real world. A sharper tone can be employed to deliver that message.



7. **Adjust to learning styles:** Some students benefit from a real-time dialogue while you edit their copy. Others may need to go back and review the changes you've made, including notes of explanation. Incorporate both, but tailor your teaching to their individual needs.
8. **Reinforcement:** Don't just correct. Praise, if not overdone, is an important learning tool.
9. **Review:** Set time aside to meet with students off deadline and review their work on a regular basis, explaining how and why you graded their work.
10. **Share:** Set aside time during each class meeting for students to speak about their work of the past week. War stories – the individual successes and failures – are important teaching tools.



**Prof. Fred Bayles**  
Director, Boston University  
Statehouse Program.

A journalist for more than 30 years, 20 of them spent as a national correspondent with The Associated Press and USA TODAY, Bayles reported from more than 40 states and 10 countries. His assignments included the 1991 Gulf War, the 1994 Haiti incursion, the 1993 Waco cult killings, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, and the 1989 Exxon Valdez disaster. Bayles also covered the 1992 and 1996 presidential campaigns and led several award-winning investigative projects, including 50-state looks at guardianship of the elderly and the child welfare system.

He joined the faculty of Boston University's College of Communication in 2004 with the mission of creating the journalism program's Statehouse Program.

The program, available to graduate students and seniors, produces an average of 200 separate news stories, videos and other multimedia content each semester on Massachusetts government and politics for 15 to 20 media organizations in Massachusetts. The program is the largest news operation in the Massachusetts Statehouse.

Bayles also has helped brokered deals with The Boston Globe, Gatehouse Publications and Patch.com to use student content on their hyperlocal sites. The resulting Boston University News Service is being incorporated into the journalism curriculum over the academic year.

Bayles is the author of *Field Guide to Covering Local News: How to Report on Cops, Courts, Schools, Emergencies and Government*, which will be published by CQPress/Sage in Fall 2011.

## **Best of Times, Worst of Times: Grade Inflation, Student Apathy, Achievement Anxiety and Students' Increased Sense of Entitlement**

❖ By Debashis “Deb” Aikat

- 1. Talk about Grades in Class:** Address grade standards, grading timelines, assignments, and "big-picture" items in classroom situation where majority of the students are in attendance. Do not cut special secret deals with any student regarding grades, no matter how exceptional the case or the student may be. Students talk amongst each other and word will get out that you entertain special deals.
- 2. Downplay the Importance of Grades During Complaint Sessions.** When students come to you with a complaint, aim to focus on the learning aspect of the assignment, not the letter grade. Ask leading questions that seek out why, how, when, what, where the assignment failed to address the checklist that you created for each assignment. Use Rudyard Kipling's six honest serving men: “What and Why and When and How and Where and Who.”
- 3. Get Deeply Involved with Students from Day One:** If the students know you care for them, it makes an enormous difference (but that alone is also not enough). Set clear ground rules on the very first day of class with detailed policy sheets. In other words, outline clear expectations with a detailed grading rubric that you share with the students before the project is due. This will help the students understand and appreciate where their grades come from. If students get a grade lower than they expected, you'll have documentation to explain. This help the students understand and appreciate that you are fair in grading.
- 4. Create Smaller Finite Assignments** (more work for you) **that Add Up to the Final Grade:** Avoid situations where a single assignment accounts for 50-60% of the final grade. Weighting assignments with that approach leads to situations where one big assignment may affect the final grade severely.
- 5. Share Grading Standards and Pitfalls:** At the first three or four sessions of your class, bring examples of grade A, B, C, work from your former classes so that students have a chance to see exemplary work and get an idea about specific grading standards and pitfalls.
- 6. Set Ground Rules** even if you are teaching the course for the first time. You must provide a checklist for each assignment to your students; for example, in writing assignments a spelling error may count for deductions higher than punctuation errors. It may be also important to specify if you achieve this, this, and these items, your grade will be this. This will provide students benchmarks and pointers on what to expect based on what to achieve.

- 7. Avoid Dubious Grading Policies:** Make your grading system structured and detailed. This will obviate guesswork for students -- therefore, fewer surprises for them and fewer grade appeals after each grading session.
- 8 a. College Grades Are Rarely a Guarantee of Success in the Industry:** Explain to students that in any learning environment, it is important to crave success, but it is far more important to crave the ability to be skilled in the subject area. College grades are rarely a guarantee of success in the industry. The ability to do the job, to network, and to get along with people goes much farther in a profession than letter grades. This will be a hard sell for students who have med school or law school admission blinders around their eyes. Despite your best explanations, they might still expect a high grade as their ticket to admission.
- 8 b. Plan Group Grading Sessions:** If you are teaching a class where there is a high degree of subjectivity in the assignments (i.e., writing or design classes), try to work with your colleagues (or teaching assistants, if any) to agree on grading standards if your teaching assistants (TA) are also going to grade the assignments. Disagreement with your TAs regarding grading standards can be a great source of dissension and discord in the classroom. Your TA's may be closer to your students than you are and they may be sharing their disagreements with you with the students.
- 9. Set High Standards and Create Trust in Your Grading Methods:** If you are grading with your TA's input, have pizza sessions where you grade together. For each assignment and for each student, come to a consensus and put the grade down as the final grade. Do not change grades after you reach a consensus, behind your TA's back, as this will create distrust in your grading method. Your TAs should be the extensions of your classroom philosophy and your thinking.
- 10. Low Grades May Indicate Corrective Steps:** For students who are exhibiting a pattern of lower grades, ask your TAs to contact them and try to understand the cause. Low grades in a significant group of students may sometimes cause panic among other students in your class, leading to an unhealthy obsession with grades.

## Debashis “Deb” Aikat



A former journalist, Debashis “Deb” Aikat has served since 1995 on the faculty of the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

An award-winning researcher and teacher of news media, Aikat was the inaugural winner of the Scripps Howard’s National Journalism Teacher (2003) award for “distinguished service to journalism education.”

An AEJMC member since 1992, Aikat chaired the AEJMC Teaching Committee in 2009-2010 and conducted the Best Practices Competition in information gathering (2008), diversity (2009), and critical thinking (2010). He founded the AEJMC’s “Magnanimous Mentor” initiative in 2010.

Aikat was elected in 2007 as an AEJMC representative to the ACEJMC Accrediting Council. A 2005 graduate of the AEJMC-ASJMC Journalism Leadership Institute in Diversity, he has won fellowships from USIA (1990), ASNE (1997) Freedom Forum (1997), and Poynter (1998-2000).

Aikat’s research on global communication, news media and the future of communication has been published in ACM SIGDOC, Microsoft Corporation publications, *Global Media and Communication*, *Electronic Journal of Communication*, and *Convergence: The Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*. He has reviewed manuscripts for *J&C Monographs*, *J&MC Quarterly*, *Journal of Communication* and leading publishers such as Sage, Wiley-Blackwell, Routledge, McGraw-Hill, and Oxford University Press.

The International Radio and Television Society honored him with the Coltrin Communications Professor (1997) award. Aikat earned a Certificate in American Political Culture from New York University and a PhD from Ohio University.

## Teaching Tips Inspired by a Struggling Fourth Grader

❖ By Kenneth Campbell

I'm spending part of my summer helping a struggling, rising fourth grader improve his reading. Like some college students I've taught during my 26-year experience, he has yet to learn the value of what he's expected to learn. These are a few thoughts he has inspired me to share:

1. ***Meet the students where they are.*** Sometimes I get frustrated because my little friend should know this stuff; otherwise, he would not be going to the fourth grade. Unfortunately, going to the fourth grade, in his case, is not a sign of what he knows, but rather a confluence of factors that have little to do with what he knows. And so it is with some of our college students. Being in college, or being in our classes, is not necessarily a sign that they have mastered a body of knowledge or set of skills. We have to teach them where they are, at least as a beginning, even if that means giving opportunities for work to catch up, and help them get to where they need to be, given the goals of the class, by the end of the semester.
2. ***Don't lose sight of our ultimate goal.*** Our ultimate goal is to prepare students for their future, a future in our field that changes by the nanosecond. For my little friend, I cannot begin to imagine what the future will be but he can: he says he wants to be a basketball player. We have to be able to see the future as our students see it and make what we need to teach them relevant to that future. In the mind of my little friend, playing a sport doesn't require reading, it requires practicing and playing basketball. I struggle to make reading relevant; no, telling him that he'll need to read playbooks, etc., does not work. For our students, the future calls for knowledge about our field but also the ability to gather, disseminate, and receive information and to think critically. We measure their preparedness in letter and numerical grades, but what is most important is the knowledge and skills they carry with them.
3. ***Learning styles vary.*** My young charge learns best when I can get him actively involved, like he's actively involved in a basketball practice. College students these days learn best when actively involved.
4. ***Give students a chance to succeed.*** We should remember that students have multiple courses, not just our course, and many students have outside obligations such as a job. To overwhelm them in one course not only affects their ability to succeed in that course, but others. It may also mean they learn little or nothing because they are overwhelmed, whereas they would have been more receptive to learning with less material to cover. My young friend responds better when I give him one page of words in large type in two columns, rather than three or four pages of words. When I give him multiple pages, the first thing he does is flip the pages and his face saddens page by page.

5. ***Failure should be unacceptable,*** for the student and the teacher. We should not take pride in how many students fail, but rather how many succeed – especially when passing reflects meeting realistic expectations laid out in the syllabus. We should also know if our definition of failure is the same as that of the students. My little one does not want to fail, but to him failure isn't about reading. Failure is displeasing me.
6. ***Everyone can have a bad day.*** We should all practice a little patience and understanding. If you need practice, share some time with a rising fourth grader.
7. ***Incentives work wonders.*** Fortunately, for a little kid, the promise of renting a video game overnight is an inexpensive incentive. So is a tasty treat. I've never cared for bringing treats to class, but there are other options. I find that students like opportunities to do work that is not penalized. For example, in one of my courses, I give students full credit for some work just for doing it, no matter the quality. These are typically short papers; I often find the quality is better than some graded work.
8. ***Attitude, the student's and the teacher's, is key,*** maybe the most important key, to opening up the mind to learning. I tell my young improving reader that if he comes to our reading sessions with the enthusiasm that he has outside playing basketball right now, he'll learn much more easily and he'll enjoy it. We need to think the same way as teachers. Our attitude, our enthusiasm, may determine that of the students.
9. ***Remember to smile every now and then.*** Yes, while we're teaching. Students prefer a friendly disposition, not the old serious professorial demeanor. My young friend reminds me of this when he looks up with a smile amidst my frustration while we are reading. It reminds me to relax a little and enjoy whatever progress is being made.
10. ***Remember to laugh every now and then too.*** Yes, while we're teaching. The best laugh may be when we can laugh at ourselves in front of students. That's when we have the confidence to be a good teacher. And they see us as human. My rising fourth grader, my budding basketball player, reminds me of the value of laughter each time we read. And, ultimately, I enjoy the time we spend together.



Kenneth Campbell, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, S.C. He has taught in the school for 21 years; he was head of the Journalism Sequence the past three years.

His teaching and research interests include media representation of minorities, particularly African Americans. He has written and presented more than two dozen refereed research papers on minorities in the media and mass media law, and has published several book chapters.

He is a former newspaper journalist. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Journalism.

## The Wisdom of Respect: A Top 10 List

❧ By **Nikhil Moro**

If specialized information is available by clicking a mouse, then is the human expert redundant? In other words, does a networked society diminish any value of the college professor, the physician, or the attorney?

It is an earnest question but facetious, because, among other reasons, a student receives a unique *respect* in a classroom experience: Lecturing, dialoguing, sharing eye contact and varied nonverbal cues, and the sheer joy of human interaction, all help bring a humaneness and a fulfillment to the process of learning. Receiving and giving such respect not only enhances the process of learning to the extent of that transaction, but also tends to enhance medium- and long-term retention of what is learnt.

Consequently, teachers may want to consider: Never is it more crucial to appreciate respect than when the classroom perceptibly competes with a rival vaguely called the Internet.

I list below a list of “Top 10 Wisdom Points,” fully aware that any claim of wisdom is probably sufficient (if not necessary) evidence of a lack of it.

### The Wisdom of Respect

#### 1. **Respect your student**

- a. Take none for granted, neither individual nor situation
- b. Cater to various styles of learning: Aural, visual, kinesthetic
- c. By a theory of crowdsourcing, your students as a group know more than you know; in addition, they could outwit you

#### 2. **Respect your offering**

- a. Do not succumb to administrators’ requests, often presented as stop gap contingencies, to teach outside of your most rigorous research or professional background
- b. Eschew the temptation to offer a class motivated solely by your latest reading fascination or your newest research muse
- c. Be on top of your literature, every course, every class meeting

#### 3. **Respect technology**

- a. Among many variables of humanity is the appreciation of tools; use computers to teach, receive assignments, and grade
- b. Use or discuss using social media and Wikis, the use of which has verily emerged as a life skill!
- c. Encourage students to read popular technology periodicals in supplement

#### 4. **Respect counseling**

- a. Watch for students that may not know that they do not know
- b. Use the various student services counselors available on campus
- c. *Ahimsa Paramo Dharmaha* (Sanskrit, “Non-violence, or compassion, is the ultimate duty”)



5. **Respect connection (but don't jive!)**
  - a. Learn about what sort of music your students listen to, what motivates it
  - b. Learn about your students' dreams, aspirations, ambitions, role models
  - c. Watch and learn nuances of group psychology in action
6. **Respect dichotomies: *Fact v. Theory; Information v. News; Argument v. Data; Knowledge v. Skill.***
  - a. Remember, contrasts may not be perceived a black-and-white issue when presented as "snapshots"
  - b. Elements of a dichotomy should be value-neutral
  - c. Context defines utility
7. **Respect skepticism.**
  - a. Questions are more important than answers (especially in college)
  - b. Ideas by nature are radical; contrarians by nature rock!
  - c. 'The best days are always ahead
8. **Respect the underdog.**
  - a. Whether of race, argument, performance, or gender, minorities in your classroom deserve special protection
  - b. "Comfort the afflicted, afflict the comfortable"
  - c. Outside of your lecture times, speak less and listen more
9. **Respect expectation.**
  - a. When students demand more, give them even more
  - b. 'There is nothing like a low-maintenance student
  - c. Method and question are slaves of theory, and so can you! (with apologies to Mr. Colbert)
10. **Respect meditation**
  - a. Look within to see without. "Know Thyself," exhorted the Greek and Roman god of sunlight, Apollo. In its brevity, that aphorism, which is inscribed above the entrance of Apollo's temple at Delphi, offers a profound theory of wisdom, by which wisdom may be defined as a function of self-knowledge or the lore of one's own nature
  - b. 'To learn is to soar over one's admitted humility
  - c. 'The best retained information, medium and long term, is learned by cogitating, weighing, ruminating

\* \* \*

## About Nikhil Moro



### Nikhil Moro, Ph.D.

*Associate Professor*  
Frank W. and Sue Mayborn  
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Dr. Nikhil Moro's research and teaching covers interactive technologies, media law, and writing. His work focuses on how the laws of expressive freedom may apply to Internet communication and, hence, to digital democracy.

Dr. Moro joined the University of North Texas (UNT) Mayborn School of Journalism in 2009. He has taught media law and policy, convergence and criticism at The Ohio State University, Kennesaw State University, and Central Michigan University.

A former journalist, Moro earned a Ph.D. in Communication from the Ohio State University (2006) and an M.A. from the University of Mysore, India (1997). His scholarly work is published or presented in more than 25 academic papers. His articles or reviews have appeared, or are scheduled to appear, in *Global Media and Communication*, *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Southwestern Mass Communication Journal*, and *American Journalism*. He also has reviewed book manuscripts for leading international publishers.

Dr. Moro has been nationally recognized for his research and service. In 2006 and 2009, he won awards for "Top Paper" and "Outstanding Service," respectively, from the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication (AEJMC). In 2010, he won a top paper award from the Southwestern Education Council for Journalism & Mass Communication. He has won many competitive awards, including UNT's Research Initiation Grant, Junior Faculty Summer Research Fellowship, and Transformative Instruction Initiative Fellowship.

As an invited speaker or a featured panelist, Dr. Moro enjoys the opportunity to share his research expertise in ways that motivate those around him to ask more questions and learn. In 2008-09, Dr. Moro chaired AEJMC's Civic & Citizen Journalism Interest Group after serving the two previous years as vice chair. Under his leadership, CCJIG gained a research identity and a surging membership. Dr. Moro is also active in other scholarly forums such as the AEJMC Law and Media Management & Economics divisions.

Before joining academe, Dr. Moro worked as a journalist for 10 years and in two continents. In India, he held editorial positions at *Andolana*, Mysore, and at *The Times of India*, Mumbai, and served as the founding editor of *Coffeeland News*, Madikeri. Later in the United States, Moro became the editor of *The Networker* in Columbus, Ohio.

Dr. Moro, a committed vegetarian, tries to be vegan when he can. He is fond of cruelty-free cuisines and vegan restaurants in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. For recreation, Moro swims, blogs and reads Vedanta philosophy. His favorite maxim is, "External nature is internal nature writ large" (Swami Vivekananda).

Dr. Moro brings an international perspective in emphasizing journalists' central role in sustaining representative democracy through the rule of law. He believes in journalism's capacity to effect or catalyze not only social change but also personal transformation. You may reach Dr. Moro at

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## How to Stay Relevant over a Long Career

By John Sweeney

Imagine a professor, now in his 50s, who started a career in the late 1970s. It is an easy piece of drama to note all the things that have changed since the days of yore. From cell phones to the web to search engines to HDTV...well, you get the idea.

The challenge is not how to be relevant when you are in your twenties and the world around you includes everything that is fresh and new and glitzy. The real challenge is how you manage to stay relevant—whether as a practitioner or teacher—as the world changes and the things you knew so well and did so well are suddenly dated and dull. Excuse my emphasis on advertising—as I wrestle with this subject-- but I believe the general themes apply to all communications.

Here is my top 10 list on keeping up while the world completely transforms itself.

### 1. Be nervous.

Remember that self-satisfaction in a field that changes rapidly can be synonymous with narcissism. I currently feel behind on twitter, facebook, foursquare and several other sites getting traction in advertising. Is this a criticism? No, it's a statement of an inevitable circumstance. Next summer, I'll be learning about some other sites.

And one of the three sites I learned about will crash and burn like myspace did.

### 2. Don't forget the principles that shape your field.

My students were involved in a digital assignment for a Nike client who kindly agreed to critique our work. Since I was thoroughly intimidated by digital at the time and the students seemed utterly sophisticated, I just let them play around with site ideas. This led to a pleasant first meeting and utterly unsuccessful second meeting. As the client told me, the first meeting--with cool site suggestions--was fine but then it became time to drill down on audience, strategy and other old world branding elements. I was too intimidated to force the digital world into the unchanging discipline of brand communication. Lesson Learned.

### 3. Serve the market.

My professional assignments today are very "platform neutral" as the phrase goes. Clients don't care whether we use print, television or Youtube, twitter and email to solve a marketing problem. That is quite a change from the old days where traditional advertising media used to be part of the briefing.

Using real world assignments in class will force you to stay current.

### 4. Adjust to the modern student.

The current generation is different than the one before. The next one will be different again. My current students are the brightest ever but more grade-conscious and more skeptical of a professor's authority than in the past. And that's just fine.

Setting my classes up for the current psychology of students is part of my job.

### 5. Adjust to the modern university.

You can assign blame for our great economic downturn wherever your politics wish to take you. The fact is that we will be struggling with larger classes, fewer courses and compromised resources

for years to come. The question is how we can make our courses relevant despite the cutbacks. Complaining is fine but, eventually, it will be time to do more with less.

#### **6. Search for key trends.**

I have a faculty colleague who is a leading expert on new technology. So I just cornered Paul Jones last month and asked him what development is about to explode. He said the application of gaming techniques as a way to tell stories.

OK, I'll try to learn about that as opposed of making sense of every trend and pseudo-trend being discussed. Look for a credible person to guide you through the chaos of emerging media. Paul, after all, told me that "social media" was about to become huge a few years ago. I thought it was a very odd phrase.

#### **7. Watch the job market.**

If you follow your students, you'll see how the real job process plays out in the current environment. One former student started work for a network in the marketing department. He then moved to Google where he acts as a "translator" for the company to leading media and advertising agencies. In other words, the engineers tell him what they're doing and he explains it to agencies in language they understand. There are so many new kinds of jobs and new kinds of communication firms. Follow your students and you'll have a better sense of the changes taking place.

#### **8. Teach the parts you are passionate about.**

No one can bring expertise and enthusiasm to everything in communications. So teach the things where you bring talent and expertise. You're not allowed to ignore the rest but you can certainly highlight your favorite areas. It will make you more credible and inspiring to your students if you are actually knowledgeable and inspired. It sounds like a wisecrack but it's not.

#### **9. Be part of the larger culture.**

We are not the local chamber of commerce for advertising. When someone suggested putting flashing brand names on a spacecraft orbiting earth, I was delighted it was banned. I am amazed at the ability of digital marketers to follow and know me. I will also be happy to support restrictions to protect my privacy. It is important to reflect on our role both as a professional teacher and a representative of the larger society. Students need the two perspectives.

#### **10. Find a way to feel enthusiastic.**

It is worthless to live in nostalgia about the glorious days of David Ogilvy with his luxurious commissions, print and television campaigns that reached the nation and close partnerships with an exclusive list of clients. The modern reality of media fragmentation, communication specialists, and intense accountability on revenues is the future of the field. There will be turbulence but there will also be opportunities. That's why you need to embrace the world as it will exist for our students. After all, we're supposed to be mentors and you can't nurture someone on the future when you're living defiantly in the past.

**John Sweeney**, Distinguished professor in sports communication



John Sweeney is a distinguished professor at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at UNC-Chapel Hill. He is head of the advertising sequence in the School and director of the new Sports Communication Program.

Professor Sweeney has developed and taught numerous undergraduate courses at UNC-CH. He has won 10 teaching awards during his tenure and has taught workshops on advertising creativity for companies as diverse as IBM, the Martin Agency and Aetna Insurance.

Before his university career, Sweeney was an associate creative director at Foote, Cone & Belding in Chicago. He has built on his experience in industry with consulting and can claim professional experience on more than 40 national brands in all facets of marketing and advertising. This experience includes promotional work tied to the Olympics, National Basketball Association and the NCAA.

Sweeney has been involved with AEJMC and the American Academy of Advertising for more than 15 years. He has published 46 columns and articles in publications such as *Advertising Age*, *Journalism Educator*, *Adweek* and the *Journal of Advertising Education*. He has written more than 25 commentaries on the sports business broadcast on North Carolina public radio. He has made more than 30 academic presentations at national conventions and programs.

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## Top Ten Teaching Tips

❖ By **Marianne Barrett**

1. Show up and be on time for class, office hours and appointments. We have a responsibility to our students to model the behavior we expect from them.
2. Be clear about your expectations on assignments and for the course.
3. Don't change the rules in the middle of the game. If you've told students an assignment is worth x percent of their course grade, don't make it worth y percent midway through the semester.
4. Be compassionate, but remember making special arrangements for one student disadvantages all the others.
5. If you're going to offer extra credit, make it available to all students and decide before the semester starts how much extra credit you'll make available.
6. Check your math. Make sure the total points you're offering for the course add up.
7. Be consistent.
8. If you're teaching a class in a lab, have the students turn off or rotate the monitors so you have their attention.
9. Turn their papers back in a timely manner--within the week. Use grading as an opportunity to offer individualized instruction.
10. Keep good records so if a student challenges her grade or has questions about it, you have the documentation you need
11. Remember students are why we do what we do.



Marianne Barrett is the Senior Associate Dean and Solheim Professor in the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University. Barrett assists and advises the dean in a variety of ways including mentoring junior faculty, implementing curriculum, overseeing the Cronkite School's graduate and undergraduate programs, course scheduling, enrollment management and admissions.

Barrett previously served the school as the associate director for academic affairs. She joined the faculty of the Cronkite School as an assistant professor in 1994. She received her doctorate in mass media from Michigan State University in 1993, and her Master of Professional Studies in media administration from Syracuse University in 1988..

## Top 10 Effective Teaching Strategies/Techniques

❖ By Joe Saltzman

1. Forget the new technology and concentrate on turning your students into professional journalists who can tell a story with a good beginning, middle and end – emphasizing accuracy, fairness and clear writing.
2. Get rid of the gloom and doom coming from the mouths of aging newspaper journalists. Tell your students that today is the most exciting time in decades to be a journalist because they have a chance to create new forms of journalism that serve the basic goals of any journalist – to help and inform the public.
3. Be clear and specific. Always be uncompromising when it comes to telling students what is wrong with their papers, but always tell them exactly what they must do to correct the problems.  
Never be vague and uncertain. Always be specific so the student knows exactly what he/she did wrong and how to fix it. Be brutally honest on the student papers, criticizing the work on a professional basis, holding nothing back. But always be compassionate and sensitive when you talk to them in person. You are their hard-as-nails editor on their papers, their friend and colleague in and out of the classroom.
4. Be confident but not arrogant. Students probably hate arrogance in the classroom more than anything else. Even if you have a right to be an arrogant SOB, don't show that side of yourself in the classroom. And don't be afraid to admit you are wrong when you are wrong. Students like that kind of honesty. (But don't do this too often or they will think that you are not equipped to teach their class.)
5. Find a research field you love and mine it for all it is worth. Good research informs good teaching. Academic research is most valuable when it can be used in the classroom to develop new scholars for the field. Good teaching means bringing new concepts and ideas into the classroom for students to dissect, discuss, absorb and integrate into their work.
6. Always remember that being a teacher is one of the most exciting and rewarding jobs in the world. You have a chance to improve a student's life, perhaps even change it. Teaching is passing along the tools of writing and reporting, critical thinking and ethical judgments that will help students achieve whatever they want to do in life –in or out of journalism.

7. It is important to remain a practicing journalist. What you do outside the classroom makes you a better teacher inside the classroom. It is one thing to be a good journalist in all media and quite another to use that experience to teach students how to be good journalists.
8. Good teaching starts with a good syllabus. A syllabus is a contract between you and the student. It explains what you expect from the students and exactly what they will be doing for the entire semester. Students hate surprises and a good syllabus tells them what to expect and what is expected of them. Be clear in how you grade. Students will protest their grade if your grading standards are vague and unclear.
9. Treat your classroom as if it were a newsroom. That means no one is absent – you don't miss a day of work why should you miss a day of class. No one is tardy – you don't show up late for work and you don't show up late for class. Tell the students they must e-mail or call before class explaining why they will late or absent. Only acceptable excuses – a death in the family, perhaps – are acceptable. No one can miss a deadline. If a news broadcast is supposed to be on the air at 11 p.m., you can't turn in the script at 11:01. You've never seen an announcement on the air before a newscast: We have a great news program coming up, so stay tuned and it will be on the air in a minute or so. Simple rules to live by: No absences, no tardiness, no missed deadlines.
10. Be organized. A teacher who is not organized is inviting chaos in the classroom and students hate chaos almost as much as they hate an arrogant teacher. Know what you are going to say and how you are going to say it before you walk into the classroom. Students will know immediately if you're winging it. This makes them uncomfortable and a bit scared. You are a professional. Always act like one. And don't think you can run a class simply by telling war stories. Only use a war story when it makes an important point in what you want the students to learn that day.



## Joe Saltzman



Joe Saltzman, the director of the Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture (IJPC) and the author of *Frank Capra and the Image of the Journalist in American Film*, is an award-winning journalist and professor of journalism at the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism at the University of Southern California.

He received his B.A. in journalism from the University of Southern California and his M.S. from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. After working for several years as a newspaper reporter and editor, Saltzman joined CBS television in Los Angeles in 1964 and for the next ten years produced documentaries, news magazine shows, and daily news shows, winning more than fifty awards, including the Columbia University-duPont broadcast journalism award (the broadcasting equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize), four Emmys, four Golden Mikes, two Edward R. Murrow Awards, a Silver Gavel, and one of the first NAACP Image Awards.

He was among the first broadcast documentarians to produce, write, and report on important social issues, including *Black on Black*, a ninety-minute program with no written narration on what it is like to be black in urban America in 1967; *The Junior High School*, a two-hour program on education in America in 1971; *Rape*, a 30-minute 1972 program on the crime, which resulted in changes in California law; and *Why Me?* a one-hour program on breast cancer in 1974 that resulted in thousands of lives being saved and advocated changes in the treatment of breast cancer in America. DVDs of the Saltzman documentaries are now available.

In 1974, Saltzman created the broadcasting sequence in the USC School of Journalism. During his tenure at USC, Saltzman, who has won three teaching awards, was associate dean of USC Annenberg for five years, and has remained an active journalist who has produced medical documentaries, functioned as a senior producer for Feeling Fine Productions and as a senior investigative producer for Entertainment Tonight, and wrote articles, reviews, columns, and opinion pieces for numerous magazines and newspapers.

He has been researching the image of the journalist in popular culture for twenty years and is considered an expert in the field. His IJPC database and this web site are considered the world-wide resources on the subject. Saltzman is co-founding editor of the peer-review *The IJPC Journal* and creator of the IJPC Web Site and the IJPC Database.

Saltzman, who was awarded the 2005 Journalism Alumni Award from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, the Alumni Association's highest alumni honor, was named the national Journalism & Mass Communication Teacher of the Year by the Scripps Howard Foundation. The Scripps Howard Foundation's National Journalism Awards are considered among the most prestigious awards in American journalism. He will receive a \$10,000 cash prize and The Charles E. Scripps Award at the keynote session during the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication convention in St. Louis on August 10. He was also recognized at the Scripps Howard Foundation's National Journalism Awards dinner in Cincinnati on May 3.

## Top 10 List to Make You a Better Teacher

(à la David Letterman)

❖ By Sheri Broyles

10. **Be passionate.** That's what we expect from our students. That's what employers expect from new hires. Why shouldn't students expect that from us? Be a role model. Passion is contagious. Your students will catch it from you.
9. **Expect a lot.** I believe students live up or down to your expectations. If you expect a lot, they'll reach that bar. If you don't expect a lot, well, they won't produce. As teachers we want our students to live up to their potential. That starts with your expectations.
8. **Don't overload your class.** One of my mentors once told me, "The longer I teach the less I teach and the better I teach it." I've found the same thing. Leave some room for spontaneity.
7. **Don't be afraid to get off topic.** Some of my best classes have come from discussions that have spun in unexpected directions. Maybe it begins with something that's currently in the news. Maybe it's from something a student noticed in real life. See above: Leave some room for spontaneity.
6. **Return student work quickly.** Whenever possible, try to return assignments the next class. At the very least you should return work before the next assignment is due. It's good for students to get the feedback, and it's good for you not to have the grading of multiple assignments hanging over your head.
5. **Position your classes.** I teach advertising classes, and we often talk about selling benefits. This falls into the category of "practice what you preach." Tell your students why you're making an assignment, why they need to know it, how it will help them. While it may be clear to you, it often isn't clear to your students. If you can't articulate the benefit to the students, then perhaps you should rethink whether that assignment is necessary.
4. **Give them their money's worth.** Tell your students you want to give them their money's worth. Then do it. That's why you work hard, and why you expect them to work hard. And you're willing to work hard to help them. In the end, they'll appreciate what they've accomplished.
3. **Be realistic.** When I first started teaching I thought I could change the world. I still think that, but I'm more realistic. I've learned that I can't touch every student because not every student cares. But the ones who do... well, that's how we change the world, one student at a time. A cliché perhaps, but one based in truth.
2. **Be a real person.** I try to come to class early to chit chat. I sit on the table with my legs dangling and talk about my kids and their escapades. I've asked my students whether a movie was appropriate for my kids – and taken their advice. I've talked about my dog and try to bring her to class at least once a semester. If you're a real person, you're more approachable. Don't be afraid to let your students see your non-academic side.

**And the No. 1 piece of advice to make you a better teacher.... Err in favor of the student.**

When I first started teaching a seasoned professor told me, if in doubt, always decide in favor of the student and you'll never regret it. He was right. When everything is balanced, I tip the scales toward the student. It's the better choice.



**Sheri Broyles, Ph.D.**

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Sheri Broyles serves as interim chair of the Department of Strategic Communications and has taught a variety of advertising classes at UNT since 1996, from lower-level courses to the capstone Advertising Campaigns classes. Her professional background includes work in advertising, PR and marketing for a symphony orchestra and as a copywriter for an advertising agency. She has also dabbled in writing for newspapers.

Sheri's passion is teaching, and she believes it's important to mentor those new to academe. She has been part of a team who presents teaching workshops for new faculty at the University of North Texas. When Sheri started her tenure-track position, she was the mother of two — ages five and two. Because of this experience, she also has mentored those who struggle with the work/life balance in academe.

One focus of Sheri's research involves pedagogical themes, and she has published in *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator* and the *Journal of Advertising Education*. Other research interests have evolved from her creative work in advertising and include a variety of aspects of creativity such as the creative personality, entry-level creative portfolios, the study of women within creative departments at advertising agencies and, most recently, ethnographic studies of small and large advertising agencies. She also has written on subliminal advertising. Her research has been published in the *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, the *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, and *Southwestern Mass Communication Journal*.

Sheri is active in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), with 3,500 members from around the world. She has served as head of the Advertising Division, helps coordinate the annual Teaching Workshop for the Advertising Division and is currently an elected member of the Standing Committee on Teaching.

# Thoughts on Teaching for New Professors

❖ By Jennifer Greer

I write these tips thinking back 15 years to my first semester as an assistant professor at the University of Nevada, Reno. I had just completed my doctorate at Florida and moved west, scared and unsure of what to do in this new job in a new land. My first semester, I was assigned to teach a graduate seminar on current media issues and to team teach an undergraduate media writing class.

I had taught as a graduate assistant, but I faced a whole new world as a “real” professor. I had a hard time adjusting to teaching graduate students, especially with half of the students older than me. One man, in his 50s and a holdover from the free-flowing 1960s and 1970s, called me “Little Girl.” I’m not exaggerating. In my undergraduate class, I had a student who was well behaved when the senior professor was in the room, but on days when I taught on my own he put on his sunglasses, leaned back in his chair and went to sleep. I didn’t understand the courses and curriculum process, assessment, FTE, the faculty activity reporting system, academic bankruptcy, grievances, “points” for each type of research activity, and all the other academic jargon that was thrown at me. On a personal level, my husband was looking for work in our new hometown, and my toddler was growing by leaps and bounds while I was rushing around figuring out my new job.

The good news is that I survived, ended up being a pretty good teacher, got tenure and have had some pretty amazing administrative jobs recently. But if I could go back to that 30-year-old new assistant professor from 1996 and give her some advice on teaching those classes, here are five things I’d tell her:

***1) Remember that you know more about what you’re teaching than your students.***

This would have helped me tremendously in both my graduate issues seminar and my undergraduate writing class. There’s no need to be tentative when you make points or draw conclusions. I kept thinking that someone was going to call me out, so I’d hem and haw about issues, especially with the graduate students. Remember that you have been hired as the expert, and that your degree, your work experience or both make you an expert. There’s no need to be arrogant or not open to challenges, but don’t fall into the habit of second guessing what you know. Your boss had enough confidence to put you in that class, so take ownership of it and be bold when imparting what you know. It will change the classroom tone immediately. Students like confident professors. And you’ll feel so much stronger walking into that classroom each day.

***2) Don’t be afraid to throw the lesson plan out the window (or even walk in the classroom sometimes without a lesson plan).***

The 1996 Jennifer would thoroughly plan every lesson, bring in a schedule and time the class blocks to the minute. She’d get stressed if a class went five minutes over on a planned activity. Who would have thought that being less prepared would work better for me? I now go into class with a topic to cover and a PowerPoint or lesson outline of major points. But I don’t stress if I only cover part of what I planned or if a current event takes us down a different path for the whole period. Some of my best classes have come when I diverge completely from the schedule. For example, a student asked about *The News of World* phone

hacking scandal at the start of one recent class, and we spent 35 minutes in discussion. This digression scuttled our in-class exercise on feature leads, so I cut down on my expectations for that assignment and sent the practice home with them. But I couldn't pass up the opportunity to discuss journalistic ethics, legalities in newsgathering and tabloid vs. legitimate news organizations with this real-time, real-world example. One of my favorite exercises is to bring an armful of newspapers, put students in teams and have them find examples of what we're studying to share. This works for everything from commas use to research methods. Students in computer labs can use the Internet in the same way. They become engaged, teach themselves and others (with your guidance) and remember the content better. I use this "lesson plan" when I've been working on a manuscript or grading all night and have no time to prepare. We've all been there.

### ***3) Don't pack too much into your classes.***

In my first few years, I crammed a ton into my syllabi and rushed through topics like a freight train. Even when students had a "deer in the headlights" look or bombed a test, I'd plow ahead so we could cover EVERYTHING before the end of the semester. I've learned that a little goes a long way. I'm teaching that beginning media writing class again this summer, 15 years later, and I no longer think my students have to have memorized the entire *AP Stylebook* by the end of the course. If they're fairly competent on major areas (commas, numbers, titles, etc.), I feel like I've made a difference. Other classes, internships and, eventually, work experience will hone their skills. Remember your class is one step in an entire curriculum preparing students for the work force. Pick a few things to emphasize and work on making sure students master those. If you need to step back, repeat a lesson or take out an assignment, so be it.

### ***4) Take control of your classroom. Do not tolerate inappropriate behavior.***

Back to "Little Girl" man and "sunglasses guy." I would tell 1996 Jennifer to call them on their behavior immediately. I never opened my mouth to either of them. I've learned that when I do, nine of 10 correct themselves immediately and apologize. Students, like all of us, test limits and appreciate boundaries. Other students certainly appreciate an instructor setting boundaries because bad behavior makes them as uncomfortable as it does the teacher. My approach has been to talk to the student after class or in an e-mail, accentuating the positive. Example: A student in a small class constantly was on his computer. I sent him a nice e-mail saying that I realized he could multi-task, but I was afraid that other students might be hurt that he wasn't listening to them during discussion. I also pointed out that guest speakers might find it rude as they didn't know him like I did. He sent back an e-mail saying he never thought of it that way. We didn't see his computer for the rest of the semester. If private conversations don't work, it's OK to call the student out in class. But I've found that the vast majority of students respond to that first private communication.

### ***5) Assign tasks that you enjoy doing. If you're having fun, your students will too.***

This summer, I'm teaching the entire beginning media writing class for the first time in 10 years (I had been doing the lecture portion only). I came up with new assignments and exercises because mine were so dated. I looked at exercise after exercise on death and destruction and thought "Yuck!" A few of these are great for teaching breaking news, but the subjects were depressing. So we've "interviewed" Bill Moyers about journalism today, pretending we were in Jon Stewart's chair. We met the new superintendent while covering a meeting at the Tuscaloosa Board of Education. We went to a local farmer's market. We did a

mock press conference with the new principal of a school severely damaged in Tuscaloosa's April 27 tornado. We profiled student athletes. I was with them every step of the way, having a ball. Only two students missed a class all summer, primarily because I think they had fun when they came. And they learned just as much, if not more, than with the serious, formal, in-class writing assignments.



### **Jennifer Greer's bio**

Jennifer Greer is chair of the Department of Journalism at the University of Alabama and is vice chair of AEJMC's Elected Standing Committee on Teaching. Before joining Alabama's faculty in 2007, Greer was an associate professor of journalism and social psychology at the University of Nevada, Reno. Her administrative experience at Nevada included three years as interim associate dean and academic chair and six years graduate director.

Greer researches media effects, gender, and emerging media and is a member of the editorial boards of *Mass Communication & Society*, *Journalism Educator* and *Journalism & Communication Monographs*.

She has twice been awarded college-wide teaching awards and has been involved with curriculum review and revision for more than a decade. Greer has held leadership roles in AEJMC for 14 years. In addition to the teaching committee, she's been head, vice head, and PF&R, research and teaching chair for the Mass Communication and Society division. Greer has served on the selection committee for the AEJMC Emerging Scholar Program since 2009 and now chairs that program. She has headed and served on the MC&S research grant selection committee for several years. She's also been a member of several other AEJMC division and groups, and she coordinated the 2007 AEJMC Midwinter meeting in Reno.

Greer has lead campus readership programs at Nevada and Alabama, assisting faculty and conducting teaching workshops for those who wish to use newspapers in the classroom. Recently, she's assisted faculty at Alabama who use the newspapers as the primary text in first-year composition courses.

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## Teaching Tips for New Profs

❧ By Amy Falkner

Providing structure for students is vital. You can get off to a great start by carefully considering your classroom management techniques and grading approach *before* you enter the classroom. My advice is to be tough at the beginning; you can always ease up as you go. Doing that in reverse makes for an ugly semester. Below are tips to help you set the stage for a successful one.

1. On Day 1. I write on the board the class name and number (in case they are in the wrong place, Professor Falkner (so they know what to call me) and the agenda for the class period.

Spend about 5 minutes telling them your background, your experience – why you are standing up there. Impress them so they are ready to learn. After that, don't talk about your accomplishments. War stories wear quickly. Use them to illustrate a point but that's it.

2. During that first-day lecture, engage the students right away. Ask them questions, make them feel free to ask questions. Keep them the full class period and even run a minute or two over to show them there's a lot of material to cover and this is an exciting class (but not thereafter).

Remember they have information that you don't or can help you back up a point (e.g.) their internship experiences. Sharing their expertise can help you.

3. Learn their names and something odd about them. On my student information form (name, address, phone, etc.) collected on Day 1, I ask them to tell me something I wouldn't know about them by reading the form or looking at them. So they write things like "I was on the junior Olympic figure skating team" or "I am one of triplets." I read these to the class; they are usually fun and memorable for all, and it speeds up the memorization process for me.

4. Dress. You send all kinds of signals to students that first day – they will be examining you like a rare insect. What you wear establishes some distance between you and them and signals that you are the professor.

My former dean was fond of saying he wore a nice shirt with French cuffs and tie. I teach media planning and sales and we dressed in suits in the business; I do the same in class.

5. Syllabus. This is your contract with them and it needs to be prepared to its fullest with grading criteria, assignment due dates, etc. Students get very upset if you change this. List your schedule as tentative but do everything you can to stick to it. If they sense a disorganized class, they will blow it off (because they prioritize among their classes).

I print out only the schedule for the Day 1 discussion and send them to Blackboard for the balance of the syllabus. Then they know that is how I expect to communicate with them. I spend about 15-20 minutes discussing the syllabus and then head right into the material.

6. Policies and pet peeves. Make sure to mention the standard statements on academic integrity, students with disabilities, etc. Then talk about your own policies on assignments, what happens if an assignment is late, and what really annoys you (e.g.) not stapling, coming late to or texting in class. Be prepared to hassle them if they break your rule early on. Then it won't happen again.

7. Your title. Most of our faculty go by "professor." It doesn't make a difference if you have a Ph.D. or not. I ask my students to call me Professor Falkner, not Dean, to foster that in this relationship I am their teacher. I don't want them to call me Amy. I sign everything "PF" (as in Professor Falkner) and that is usually what they end up calling me as the semester goes on.



8. Your availability. Today's students want to know when you are accessible and how. How do office hours work? Is there a sign-up? Will you take phone calls at home? Until what time? Can they have your cell phone number? Text you? What is your policy on e-mail? Some professors guarantee to respond in 24 hours to an email sent by 10 p.m. Think hard about how accessible you will be and explain your policies. Realize if you fail to respond quickly or respond inconsistently, you will hear about it on your evaluations.

9. Grading — tough but fair is the goal. I am a hard grader. For example, if I have an intro class with 65 students, 7 or 8 might get A's. In a class of 20, it's 2-3. Set your standards high and be clear what it takes to reach them. No one likes a conversation at the end of the semester with a student about why s/he got a low grade. It never goes well. And if you bump it up then the rumor gets around that all you have to do is plead your case and you get a good grade. A secret: grade hard during the semester, and then bump them up one level (B- to B) or a little at the end.

If you have a group assignment, develop a rubric so they evaluate each other and factor that into the grading equation. This way they hold each other responsible. Tell them ahead of time if a slacker is identified you will lower his/her grade. Then you have the evidence to support it and have a conversation with that student.

10. Rewrites or re-do. This is relative to your profession and the course you are teaching. If you are a journalist, your experience professionally is you probably reworked projects 6-7 times — this is amazing to students. In high school, they wrote it once or twice and turned it in and got an A.

Decide on whether you will accept rewrites and explain the policy the first day and again before the first assignment goes out. Check with your Chair and others in your department to see how they handle it. This is a generation who wants to do it right, but you can't grade and regrade forever.

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Falkner teaches courses in media planning/buying and advertising strategy. The senior classes of 2008 and 2001 awarded her the Newhouse Teaching Excellence Award. She is the first person to win this award twice. The University also named her a Meredith Teaching Excellence Award winner in spring 2003.

Falkner was the lead researcher for G/L Census Partners, and conducted the Gay/Lesbian Consumer Online Census, a comprehensive study of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered demographics, purchasing behaviors, lifestyle and media usage. The study proved instrumental to Fortune 500 marketers and media companies as a tool for developing products and marketing tailored to GLBT consumers.

Before entering the academy, Falkner worked for 10 years in the newspaper industry in both editorial and advertising. In 1995, she was named one of *Presstime* magazine's Top 20 newspaper executives under 40.

Falkner entered the newspaper advertising business after finishing a fellowship at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies in its select media management and entrepreneurship program. She has a master's degree in magazine journalism from the Newhouse School and a bachelor's degree in communications/journalism from St. John Fisher College.



## Teaching Tips

❧ By **Bonnie J. Brownlee**

1. **Thoughtful planning:** Before committing your course to paper or electronic syllabus format, think through the entire course: your goals and objectives, your readings and other assignments, your examination plans and dates.
2. **Flexibility:** Be prepared to shift readings, assignments, and class guests if events make such shifts important. BUT, make allowance for shifting in writing on your syllabus and make certain that any shift does NOT negatively affect grading for any student.
3. **Clear expectations:** Make sure your written syllabus is clear and complete (see #2 on shifting). Reiterate expectations verbally as needed during the course and in connection with each specific assignment. Make sure your syllabus includes your policy on academic misconduct and electronic device use in class.
4. **Open communication:** Provide ample avenues for students to consult with you.
5. **Mimicked behaviors:** Exhibit your own intellectual curiosity and enthusiasm in class and in office visits with students as a model for what you hope from them.
6. **Honest presentation:** When you don't have an answer, say so (and then seek one and report back; see point #5).
7. **Organized classroom / varied time management:** Make the time you meet with students in class as productive as possible. Provide an outline for the day at the start of each class, and vary lectures with visuals and student participation during the class period.
8. **Consultation with teaching experts:** All campuses have teaching experts. Consult as needed or desired for ways to improve. Invite your own colleagues to visit your class to provide perspective and advice.
9. **Consultation with content experts (your colleagues):** Ask to see the syllabi of your colleagues and seek their guidance on teaching the content of your course. Ask THEM for five teaching tips.
10. **Enjoying your work:** Show your enjoyment in the classroom, in what you say, how you say it, and how you handle student questions, participation and grading.

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Bonnie J. Brownlee is associate professor of journalism at Indiana University. She has been on the faculty since 1981 and served as the associate dean for undergraduate studies from 2000 through August 2009. She has been involved in the internationalization of the school's journalism curriculum, serves on the university's Overseas Study Advisory Council and currently teaches a course on media in Latin America. Students visit Chile as a part of the class.

As associate dean, she served on committees dealing with the campus general education program, both journalism and campus accreditation, and a campus strategic plan. She has been an elected member of the campus and university faculty councils and the Bloomington Faculty Council's agenda committee. For 10 years she chaired the campus faculty grievance committee and currently chairs the Bloomington faculty board of review.

She has chaired the International Division of AEJMC and regularly serves as a site team member on ACEJMC accrediting visits. She twice served on site teams reviewing programs in the United Arab Emirates.

Brownlee is co-author (with Dave Weaver, Cleve Wilhoit, Randy Beam and Paul Voakes) of *The American Journalist in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2007). She holds A.B. and A.M. degrees from Indiana University and a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

## **Student Attendance: Being Present for the Teaching Moment**

❖ By **Birgit Wassmuth**

Over the course of my 30-year teaching experience at large public and small private institutions I have always been very understanding of students' excuses as long as they were "valid" and their absences were "documentable and beyond their control," such as a medical emergency, court appearance, funeral, out-of-town Varsity games, etc.

But all that changed last fall. When I asked a student who had missed class for a week because of a funeral to bring me the memorial service program, he sent me an electronic copy by email. I opened the file and reviewed the cover and back page, which contained a picture of what we thought was his beloved aunt. It provided details regarding the funeral home and service. The two inside pages, however, were missing critical information. It turned out to be a template that helped grieving family members through the process of writing the copy by providing generic text with [insert name], [insert song], or [insert place] throughout.

As Department Chair, I thought I had seen it all: Forged signatures on attendance sheets and doctor's notes, even pictures of car accidents. This one topped the list. Apparently, my student went shopping at the online superstore for funeral program templates, conveniently available at [www.funeralprogram-site.com](http://www.funeralprogram-site.com)

Without hesitation I reported the student to the university's office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

As of this year (what took me so long?!), I no longer distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, because in the end it does not matter. The bottom line is that a student who missed class missed a valuable learning opportunity in the classroom – physical or virtual.

I understand that some faculty do not have an attendance policy because they do not want to spend precious class time taking roll. Their argument is that, as long as a student submits good work despite multiple absences, the instructors don't really care about attendance. I disagree. My experience has shown that the quality of the work usually suffers with extensive absences. Or, if the work of a habitually absent student is good, it may be likely that the work was purchased from a ghost writer or may include plagiarized material.

I also understand faculty who have a very strict attendance policy. As long as that policy is clearly spelled out in their syllabi I can support my faculty when students complain to me, the department Chair, about it.

Because there is no value in having an attendance policy if you do not enforce it, I have designed creative ways to take attendance without students even noticing it. I include interactive activities in my lectures. For example, I hand out index cards and have students write their name and the date on one side. At a certain point during class, I ask them to turn the card over and then assign them a task relevant to the topic and a specific point of the lecture. They may have to write a word, or a number, or a sentence, or even draw a picture. These are not graded assignments. (No points for attending class!) I use them as teaching moments during the following class period when I share the results of these "surveys" and show the drawings.

For online and hybrid classes, "attendance" may be documented using features of course management software such as BlackBoard and WebCT-Vista that record statistics on which students accessed the site, visited which folders and files, at what time and for how long.

That's a convenient, indirect measure to take attendance as it relates to online presence in your virtual classroom.

So what is the real value of an attendance policy? For the "sage on the stage" it was a way to make sure to have an audience. For the "guide on the side" however, we are looking for conversation partners, interactivity, and dialogue.

Absenteeism, or lying about it, and bad grades are measurable symptoms. More often than not, they are the product of procrastination and poor time management. Here are a few treatments for those symptoms:

- 1) Teach or review time management skills as they relate to your course.
- 2) Command the students' attention rather than demanding it by making experiential and collaborative learning essential elements of every class meeting.
- 3) For inspiration and guidance, refer to the body of knowledge provided by the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).

Today's students want to be active, interactive, experiential, mobile, and engaged. We can't really expect these students to invest in learning unless they see dividends up front. It's up to us to inspire and motivate them. So kick up your teaching a notch or two. Be compelling. Engage students in learning, and demonstrate the value of knowledge.

An attendance policy is part of that contract with our students we call a syllabus. We carefully spell out what we expect of students. But think about what they can expect from us. When we do our jobs well, our students will want to come to class – just to be present for the teaching moment.



**Birgit Wassmuth**, Chair of the Department of Communication at Kennesaw State University in Georgia since 2006, has been an active member of AEJMC for more than 25 years. She was an officer for the Visual Communication division for several years and served as its Head in 1990-1991.

Having taught at Drake University, University of Missouri-Columbia, University of Florida, Temple University, and the University Kassel, Germany, she has learned from teaching experiences and learning environments at small private and large public institutions. She earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in mass communication from the University of Minnesota.

She has recently been elected by members of ASJMC to serve on the Accrediting Council (ACEJMC) starting in Fall 2010.

## Teaching Tips

❖ By Susan Keith

- 1. Make reading the syllabus irresistible.** During the first week of classes students are bombarded with reading material, just as all sorts of interesting back-to-campus events are going on. One way to ensure that more students learn course policies is to reward close reading of the syllabus. There are several ways to do this. You could, for example, give an open-syllabus quiz on the syllabus or let students compete in teams to answer questions about course policies. In my editing class, I give students a syllabus that is peppered with spelling, grammar, punctuation, mathematical and Associated Press style errors they should be able to catch from what they learned in the two prerequisite reporting classes. A student earns one point of extra credit (toward a final total of more than 1,000 course points) for every error he or she is the FIRST to find and report to me via e-mail. (Requiring students to be the first to find an error to earn a point gives them a sense of deadline pressure that's especially important in 21<sup>st</sup> century editing.) If students have read the syllabus closely enough to see that the text says "than" when it should have said "then," they can't help but have learned the course policies.
- 2. Demystify the process of teaching from the first day of the course.** Ask students on the first day and frequently thereafter what they think the purpose of an exercise or reading is. Sometimes students "get" why they've been asked to do something. Other times, no matter how well we think we have explained what we are doing, some students will assume that our assignments are "busywork" or fail to see how they dovetail with the rest of the course content. If you start the course by asking students why you had them do whatever it is you do on the first day of class – introduce themselves, write a bio, etc. – then you will set up an atmosphere where students become more conscious about the pedagogical purposes of different types of course material. You may also find yourself re-evaluating your own reasons for using certain readings, assignments or exercises, which can help keep a course fresh for you.
- 3. Give students some assignment alternatives where doing so is in keeping with the learning objectives of the course.** For example, if you ask each student or groups of students to teach the class a grammar rule, let them use any medium they want to convey the rule. (Some students might prefer to make a short cell phone video than stand up in front of the class.) If you need to reinforce a specific skill like mathematical competency, offer students a choice of story types that address that skill: sports, government, entertainment. Yes, it's more work for you, but it may pay off in greater student engagement.
- 4. Let students develop some assignments.** If you need to assess a certain type of knowledge but know students don't care for the way you do it, let them think up something better! For example, students often dislike news quizzes, thinking (perhaps correctly) that they sometimes are less an assessment of what students know about what is going on in the world than an indication of what the professor personally finds interesting. Divide students into groups and let them come up with alternatives that are within your parameters (for example, must be worth a total of 100 points over the semester, can't take more than five minutes of class time each week). Choose the most workable of their ideas and let students vote on which one you use during the course.
- 5. Consider rewarding engagement/attendance.** Journalism skills classes often follow a pattern in which students practice a skill, such as interviewing, during class time, then are sent out perfect that skill on their own. Students who weren't in class for the practice session often don't do as well on the final assignment as those who took the time to come to class and engage in the practice session. One way to encourage students to attend class and take advantage of in-class work is to have students turn in some product at the end of class and give those who turned something in a few points toward their final grade. Students who didn't attend – or refused to participate – get zeros. So there is an immediate and quantitative disadvantage to not coming to class.

6. **If you have to be up late anyway, offer late-night virtual office hours.** Because I have a young child and a spouse who works second shift, I get most of my grading, class prep and research done between 9 p.m. and 2 a.m., which is also prime student work time. So I mark on my syllabus (and office door) that I am available for “virtual office hours” during some of those hours one night a week. “Available” means that I have the beep turned up on my e-mail and will answer student questions immediately while I’m working. This tip obviously won’t suit professors who get up at 5 a.m. to write, but it works for me. I find that students value quick answers and a sense that I was burning the midnight oil with them more than almost anything else.
7. **Be willing to go to students, especially if you teach skills classes.** I teach a course in which students use software most are encountering for the first time and generally use in campus labs outside my department’s building. While I prefer not to spend a lot of classroom time “teaching the software” (and have developed various handouts and links to YouTube tutorials that help me avoid that), there are one or two students in most classes who are surprisingly uncomfortable with computers (or computers unlike their own). I find that if I make a visit to a campus lab once or twice during a semester, or talk the student, over the phone on a Saturday afternoon, I can usually take him or her from being frustrated to successful in just a few minutes. As one student told me last semester, “I’ve never had a professor who came and found me in a campus lab – twice.” Sometimes it’s nice to get out of the office for a minute, too.
8. **Explain penalties.** It’s sometimes easy to forget when we’re putting together assignments that some students won’t turn them in on time, will do only half of them, etc. What’s the penalty? We need to remember to tell students. Similarly, if your final course paper is worth 25 percent of the course grade, could a student with an A average decide not to do it and still pass the course?
9. **Explain plagiarism.** I am convinced that many of our students just aren’t as clear on what constitutes plagiarism as they should be – perhaps because some of our university policies are a bit byzantine. Consider devoting a session early in the semester to what plagiarism means and discuss – especially in photography or design-oriented courses – the difference between plagiarism and homage.
10. **Ask students what they learned.** Don’t wait until the first test or the end of the semester. At the end of each class period or unit, ask students to tell you the most interesting or surprising thing they learned. If you’re enthusiastic when you ask this, you’ll generally get interesting answers – and sometimes questions students wouldn’t otherwise have asked. “The most interesting thing I learned was \_\_\_\_\_. But that makes me think: Why does ... ?”

Susan Keith



A former journalist, Susan Keith is an associate professor in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rutgers University. Susan joined the Rutgers faculty in 2004 after teaching for three years in the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University.

At Rutgers, Susan has taught undergraduate courses in editing and design, newer media law and policy, media ethics, and global news. She has served as area coordinator for the media studies area of the School of Communication and Information's interdisciplinary Ph.D. program, and she has taught graduate classes in media studies theory and newer media law and policy. She has also chaired her department's curriculum committee. Susan was named an AEJMC Emerging Scholar for 2011 and a Page Legacy Scholar for 2010-2011 by the Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication at Pennsylvania State University. Her research on journalists' work, media ethics, and visuals of war has been published in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Journalism Studies*, the *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, *Visual Communication Quarterly*, *Newspaper Research Journal*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, and *Media, War & Conflict*.



## Top 10 Wisdom Points

❧ By Karen Miller Russell

1. **Don't ask your students to do something you wouldn't want to do.** Think of a more creative way to teach even the most rudimentary material; you'll find it's a lot more fun to grade, too.
2. **People learn by doing.** When I tried to teach students how to use a wiki, they hated me. When I created a wiki for them to use for a group project, no one said anything about having to learn how to use it.
3. **We're all social creatures.** Research shows that collaborative learning is highly effective, and you can figure out how to build collaborative projects into any class if you value them.
4. **Go where the students are.** No, you don't have to go to the downtown pubs. Or Facebook. Just update your case studies and examples frequently so they reflect what current students know.
5. **Excuse me, your enthusiasm is showing.** If you find yourself dreading going to class, you can bet the students are, too. It has to matter to you first.
6. **Lectures and textbooks are dead.** Okay, I'm exaggerating. A little.
7. **You never know what's going on in someone else's life.** I learned this when I ran into an alum who'd been an irresponsible slacker when she was in my class, and she told me her mother had been desperately ill during that semester. My assumption had been all wrong, and she's at a Fortune 500 company now.
8. **Design backwards.** Decide what skills/abilities/knowledge/experiences students should have at the end of your course, figure out what activities will help students attain them, then create a schedule for the class.
9. **Grading sucks.** Make it easy on yourself by letting students know in advance what the criteria for grading each assignment will be. All of you will be happier.
10. **Expect more and you'll get more.** Did you think I meant this about the students? It applies to us, too.



**Karen Miller Russell** is associate professor in the Department of Advertising and Public Relations at the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia. She teaches public relations core courses at the undergraduate and graduate level, as well as media history. In 2011 she received her department's outstanding teaching award, and in 2007 the team she advised won the national championship in the Public Relations Student Society of America Bateman Case Study Competition, and three other teams have received honorable mentions.

Russell has a deep interest in social media and its impact on the communication professions. Her blog, Teaching PR (<http://www.teachingpr.org>), brings public relations education forward for public discussion, and *PRWeek* named her one of PR's 30 "Top Tweeters" in 2010. She organized three social media conferences sponsored by Porter Novelli for professionals, students and educators, and she was invited to participate in a panel on "Teaching Social Media" at Edelman's 2009 New Media Academic Summit.

## **Top 10 Tips for Effectively Teaching Mass Communications Research Methods**

❧ By **Anita Fleming-Rife**

“If you tell me, I forget; if you teach me, I may not remember; if you involve me, I learn.” This Chinese proverb was put to the test when mass communication research students conducted focus groups on a topic of great significance to and impact on the African-American community. This applied communication research method coupled with an issue (prostate cancer) that is relevant to the community, deepened our students’ understanding of research while, at the same time, it strengthened student-learning outcomes.

Students in the Mass Communication Research classes at a small, private HBCU participated in the 2nd Annual National Symposium on Prostate Cancer sponsored by the University’s Center of Excellence for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development (CCRTD) by serving as communication researcher experts, and facilitating focus group discussions on information strategies to increase awareness of the screening and treatment of prostate cancer. This collaboration involved the intersection of teaching, service and research at the student-centered level, and provided an excellent hands-on learning experience for engaging the students. This was also a collaborative effort by two faculty members who taught two sections each of the Mass Communication Research course.

### **Implementation:**

- Students decided to take on this problem as a class project and met with identified client, the director of the CCRTD;
- Students engaged in identifying the research problem:
  1. American-American males are twice as likely to die from prostate cancer as their Caucasian counterparts,
  2. American-American males are 60% more likely to have prostate cancer than Caucasian counterparts;
  3. African-American males are not aware of the significance of this problem and do not seek prostate cancer screening.
- Students reviewed relevant literature and designed the study instruments (including the recruitment questionnaire, the background questionnaire for profiling the participants, and the moderator discussion guide);
- Students recruited participants from the community of interest, conducted, and facilitated all aspects of the chosen research method;
- Students videotaped the focus group discussions.
- Students debriefed client and wrote research report.
- Students presented powerpoint presentation of their work.
- Students also produced a media product, which aired on the campus radio station.

### **Impact:**

This teaching pedagogy impacted students in several ways:



1. Deepened the students' understanding of applied research;
2. Students involved in community relevant research actually learn and retain the methodology because of its relevance to a public of interest;
3. Students were excited about conducting such research as evidenced by one of the favorable comments, "We really feel we're involved in something that makes a difference to our families, our peers and to us."

This pedagogy impacted the instructors' morale in several ways:

1. The level of student excitement energized the instructors;
2. This pedagogy validated for us the significance of providing students with collaborative opportunities to conduct research that matters by engaging them in research that impacts or has the potential to impact them and their relevant communities.
3. Served as a significant and innovative pedagogy to introduce the relevance of mass communication research to the Mass Media Arts majors.
4. While we focused on the African-American community and the impact of prostate cancer on it, this pedagogy used a collaborative teaching model can be utilized for other issues and other arenas.

### Top 10 Tips for Effective Teaching Mass Communication Research Methods

1. **Empower students to make decisions about the work in which they will engage.** As proffered by Paulo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, students should be co-creators of knowledge acquisition.
2. **Re-imagine the means to provide students with the tools of information and education.** Jeremy Cohen, former editor of *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, argued that we need to find pragmatic solutions to complex social problems by using disciplinary expertise.
3. **What do students care about?:** Determine what affects them and what impacts their communities—that's a good starting point.
4. **Engage students:** The best way to do this is determine their interest.
5. **Engage community:** Go beyond the classroom and serve the community while you're at it.
6. **Group work:** When students work collaboratively, they can draw on each other's strengths.
7. **Collaboration, Collaboration, Collaboration:** The faculty modeled collaborative teaching. We worked together, we worked with the director of the Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development, a local urologist, the School of Social Work, the campus radio and television station, local churches, and other university departments.
8. **Intersect learning modalities:** Students conducted research, but they also used media technology in the process and they created a media product.

9. **Research that matters:** This method helped deepen student understanding.
10. **Making a difference:** Students said, “We really feel we’re involved in something that makes a difference to our families, our peers and to us.”



**Anita Fleming-Rife** is full professor and the newly appointed Special Assistant to the President for Equity and Diversity at the University of Northern Colorado. She has taught skills and conceptual courses for more than two decades in JMC. At Penn State, Fleming-Rife served on the Commission for Racial and Ethnic Diversity and the Taskforce to assess the University’s Framework to Foster Diversity. At Northern Colorado, she assisted its journalism program in conducting a Self-Study, and made recommendations for incorporating diversity into the curriculum.

She was just elected by AEJMC’s membership to serve a three-year term on the teaching committee. Fleming-Rife was appointed to AEJMC’s inaugural committee of Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity Assessment and its successor, the Equity & Diversity Award Committee, which she co-chaired 2009-10. She is co-chair of the Commission on the Status of Women’s, the Mentorship Project. She is most proud of her commitment to teaching excellence and recognition of it by her students. Penn State students in the College of Communications nominated her for teaching excellence and she received Distinguished Membership in the NSCS for outstanding contributions to the classroom, the campus, and the community. Fleming-Rife has published in *J&MC Quarterly*, *Journal of Development Communications*, *Media Asia*, *Journal of Negro Education* and *Communication in Brown and Black: Latino and African American Conflict and Convergence in Mass Media and Cross-Cultural Context*. She received a BA and MA at Northern Colorado and PhD at Southern Illinois-Carbon-dale.

## First Impressions: Making the Most of the First Day of Class

❧ By Paul Parsons

First impressions are important, and the opening class session is the first impression of a course. In that hour, teachers broadly convey their teaching style, their command of the subject, their expectations and their personality.

Teachers and students alike come to the first class with a combination of excitement and anxiety. Some teachers avoid opening-day anxiety by handing out a syllabus, going over the rules of the course, giving an assignment, and then dismissing early. What a missed opportunity to direct opening-day energy toward creating a sense of purpose for the course. This also creates a first impression that class time is not going to be important.

Here, then, are some ideas to make the most of the first day of class:

- *Visit the classroom beforehand.* This gives you an opportunity to visualize the class setting and adjust what you can. Sit in the back row, and think about how to communicate with the students who will be back there.
- *Be early on the first day.* Students and teachers tend to be a bit nervous about a first encounter, and both want to connect with the other. A good first impression is formed by being in the classroom early and saying hello to students as they enter.
- *Start class on time.* While it's tempting to wait a few minutes for late arrivals, especially on the first day, habits are formed early. Starting on time communicates to students already present, and to those who arrive late, that starting on time will be the norm.
- *Profess the value of the subject matter.* Rather than starting with the class roll or the syllabus, take advantage of the excitement of the opening minutes by stating the value and importance of the course. Not all students have a clear understanding of why a subject is important. Share examples of what students will learn, or how students will improve their skills.
- *Convey personal enthusiasm.* Teacher enthusiasm for a course influences student enthusiasm. Seldom do students wonder if the teacher has competence in a subject, but they do look for signs that the teacher has enthusiasm for the subject. Who you are and what you are like is of great interest to students. Share something about yourself, in a professional context, that can start building a relationship.
- *Outline course expectations.* A syllabus informs students of the nature, content, policies, expectations and logistics of the course. As a first impression, let it creatively highlight the value of learning the course content. Too often, syllabi are unimaginative, rule-infested documents replete with boldface, underlining, italics and exclamation points for added emphasis. As a column on the Association of American Colleges and Universities web site says: "The typical syllabus gives little

indication that the students and teacher are embarking on an exciting learning adventure together, and its tone is more akin to something that might be handed to a prisoner on the first day of incarceration.”

- *Discuss the textbook.* Students have grown skeptical about whether teachers will sufficiently use a textbook. If you require one, tell students how you expect them to use the text in their learning. You selected it; explain why it is good. Don't criticize it or the author. If discrepancies occur between your views and the text, explain the nature of differing interpretations when that time comes, but not on the opening day.
- *Provide substantive content.* Move as quickly as possible into substantive course content on the first day. It might be an overview of key principles, or an assignment that includes a student activity, or 10 interesting questions that students will be able to answer at the end of the course. This allows students to see who you are and how you teach, and it makes the first day more meaningful because learning is occurring.
- *Propel speaking as well as hearing.* If a class is reasonable in size, consider ways to get each student to speak during the opening session. It might be during introductions (the class roster). Or it may be breakout questions on an introductory topic. Offer prompts along the way to encourage questions about course content, the syllabus and student expectations.
- *End with a time for reflection.* At the end of the opening class session, consider giving students two minutes to write their reaction to the first day. Anonymous reaction can provide early and valuable feedback on concerns, or questions that students were afraid to raise. It starts building a climate in which students have the responsibility for their own learning in the course.

Do on the first day what you want happening in the class throughout the semester. If you want discussion, make sure you build in discussion in the opening class period. If you believe in small-group activities, then do one in that first class period. If you are primarily a lecturer but want students to speak up and ask questions, create a way to make that happen on the first day. What happens on the first day often sets the tone for the rest of the course.



❖ **Paul Parsons** is Professor and Dean, School of Communications, Elon University. He is 2010-11 President, ASJMC and winner of the 2010 national Journalism and Mass Communication Administrator of the Year award.

## Top 10 Tips About Effective Teaching

❖ By Will Norton, Jr.

**I asked 10 outstanding faculty members (with whom I have worked or whose teaching has impressed me) to provide tips about effective teaching. I have appropriated their suggestions for my tips and cited them as sources.**

### **1) Be constructive:**

“When grading a story, if nothing else, I will talk about how the ‘potential’ was there. If the student was just plain lazy, then I may break this rule.” (Joe Atkins)

“Students’ egos are fragile. They desperately crave criticism so they can get better. But when that criticism comes, they cringe in horror and either retreat into denial or feel momentarily hopeless. Then, tell them where they fell short. Tell them how to make it better and send them right back out to do it over. Demonstrate that you have faith they can succeed this time. If they fail at this process twice in a row, sit with them to rewrite it together in the proper way so they can a) SEE the process and b) PARTICIPATE in making their own story better. It is critical that they own it and feel it is theirs.” (Bill Rose)

### **2) Be well prepared and relate to students:**

Learn students’ names, interests and goals. “It can improve your teaching and get them to listen for the times you address them in class.” (Owen Youngman)

“In the classroom, try to look students in the eye and avoid the ‘ah’s’ and ‘uh’s.’” (Joe Atkins)

“This generation is used to a fast-paced world. Someone once told me to change approaches at least every 20 minutes. I do not time myself, but I do try to incorporate many tools in each class. I may throw in a pertinent video to explain a point or switch to mini-group discussions. In other words, I do not just talk at them for two hours. I keep it moving and try to engage them in a variety of ways.” (Sue Bullard)

“You have to know your material, anticipate questions and obstacles and be confident in what you have to say. Get there early to check technology, be enthusiastic and teach every class like it really matters.” (Deb Wenger)

“I learned the hard way that I need to think about their experiences and drive lessons home in ways that make sense for them. They have not had the same experiences I have; so, I try to put it in terms they will understand. If I am talking about good editor/reporter relationships, for instance, I will talk about good coach/athlete relationships. Most of them have been coached; few have worked in newsrooms.” (Sue Bullard)

**3) Expect a lot from each student:**

“So many of today’s students are accustomed to rules and standards that are set but then adjusted by adults. They believe that effort alone is worth reward or that a deadline is not a deadline. I decided the best teachers and coaches I had had were those who expected a lot, outlined the standards and then seemed to expect the same from everyone.” (Kathy Christensen)

**4) Communicate a plan and be consistent:**

“I think a big frustration for students is not really knowing what's expected -- the more detailed your syllabus, the more clearly you state what's required, the better for everyone.” (Deb Wenger)

”No late papers, no makeup work, etc., and at the end of the semester, if I knew that Johnny missed three classes because of a smallpox epidemic, I would adjust, if warranted.” (Kathy Christensen)

**5) Be realistic and reflect the real world:**

“We consciously are trying to show students what journalism is really like. Many student may be better off in another major, and the students we have who really do want to do journalism would be better off if the class were not pulled down too far by the others.” (Kathy Christensen)

**6) Challenge students to develop as communicators:**

“Make them write stories in class and have the class critique each other’s stories. Or have them write them outside of class and bring them in to be critiqued by the group. You will need to lead the critique with lots of questions because they will not want to cut up each other’s work. One way to attack that is to have them turn their work in, keep it overnight, remove the bylines, then hand the stories out in the next class session to be critiqued so they do not know who they are criticizing. The object is to get them thinking and discussing why stories work or do not work. In other words, get them to talk. Give them as many good, relevant handouts as you can muster and explain their worth to them. If you push them harder than they have been pushed before, they will respond. Let them know from the outset that it will be difficult, but they can do it if they work hard. And tell them you will do everything in your power to see to it that they do not fail at the task. If they are going to work hard, you have to work hard with them. Fire them up. Let them know that if they can do this, they probably can work in a professional newsroom, so it is to their benefit to work hard.” (Bill Rose)

**7) Show them how to write and report:**

“Do not just tell them how to write and report. Flood them with good writing -- stories culled from the best newspapers and magazines that showcase good writing and good reporting. Have them read at least one a week and report on why the story works or does not work. From those critiques, they will unconsciously take apart the stories and learn how they are put together. If the class is small enough, go over their stories with them individually, in private. Sit at a computer so you can take the reins and show them what you are talking about if they appear not to totally understand. They are eventually going to have to do that with editors in a newsroom, theoretically, so why not give that experience now so they will be ready for it at their eventual jobs? In other words, constantly feed them tips

they can use in the real world and show them how others have used them. Discuss the stories in class and point out the various strengths and weaknesses and the writing tools on display -- clarity, simple sentences, good strong Anglo-Saxon words, alliteration, how to use the sounds of words to speed up or slow down a sentence or story, how to pick just the right word, how to make a sentence sing, etc., etc., etc.” (Bill Rose)

**8) Promote interaction by asking students what they think and having them discuss and answer questions:**

“Ask, ‘Does that make sense to you? Do you see what I am talking about? If you do not, please tell me. It is OK to disagree, just say it out loud so we can all talk about it.’ If you can get them talking, even when they disagree or rebel, you will be able to see inside their minds and will know how to explain it to them so they will understand it. If you roll over them, if you ridicule them, if you express disdain for them, if you show you do not trust them, they will not learn as much and you will have failed. It is real easy to cut them down and make fun of them. But if you refrain, you build good will and, more importantly, trust. You need them to see clearly that you are bending over backward to help them and that you care and really want them to become better. People respond to that. That is not just in a classroom, but in every aspect of life. Make it clear from the start that class discussion is a big part of their grade and they cannot lose points if they throw caution to the winds and join the discussion. That is how you see inside their very guarded young minds. And that is when you can confront misapprehensions and mistakes and glaring ignorance. Tell them when they are wrong, but do it in a positive way if possible. If not, flatly tell them they are wrong and why. Sometimes, class discussion can produce evidence of why someone is under-performing. Follow up on that after class by offering to help them work through it.” (Bill Rose)

**9) Be responsible, be fair and focus on feedback:**

“If you are teaching a skills class, it is important to return assignments the next class meeting, if possible. It helps to return an assignment before giving students another one. I recommend giving students a sample of what the professor thinks is a good story or video. It is important especially early in the semester to spend enough time discussing the assignments when they are returned. I always have been pleased with how much students improve their writing during the semester.” (Susanne Shaw)

This means returning “...graded work in a timely manner so that students can learn from their mistakes, and it also means that you should post grades regularly and consider having a day when students can “check in” on where they stand in the class. I pride myself (knock on wood) that I have never had a grade appealed -- students know what grades they're getting and why.” (Deb Wenger)

“Create regular opportunities for students to teach each other and teach themselves. In-class breakouts with a tight time frame and singular focus are great because students process in real time, and the whole class benefits from hearing other students' ideas and analyses. I also use students to lead weekly discussions based on readings and assignments.” (Owen Youngman)

# 10) Read and encourage students to read:

**“Magazines:** I re-started my subscriptions to *Harper's* and *The Atlantic* and the *New Yorker*, for instance, which I had not had time to read in recent years. Great magazines always are full of thought-provoking material that can be directly applied to the classroom. Also, do not forget the trade publications if they are remotely relevant to your areas.

**Newspapers and other daily/weekly news sources:** Of course, read the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, and a couple of local dailies. Create a handful of targeted Google searches. Use RSS feeds to make sure you are always reminded to read your favorite writers, bloggers, columnists, and news sources.

**Books:** Stay current with the NYT book review, the new WSJ book review sections that appear Friday and Saturday, and any online review sources you like. The default action is, buy anything that interests you and read it for ideas and to help broaden your thinking.” (Owen Youngman)

## Contributors:

Joe Atkins, professor at the University of Mississippi, was congressional correspondent in the Washington bureau of Gannett News Service and worked at newspapers in North Carolina and Mississippi.

Sue Bullard, associate professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and former managing editor of the *Detroit News*.

Kathy Christensen, professor of practice at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and former executive producer of World News Tonight with Peter Jennings and former managing editor of the *Baltimore Sun*.

Bill Rose, adjunct professor at the University of Mississippi and former National Editor of the *Miami Herald* and former editor of *Tropic Magazine*, the Sunday Magazine of the *Miami Herald*. His first class at Ole Miss produced *Roads of Broken Dreams*, a publication that was awarded the 2011 Robert F. Kennedy award for college print.

Susanne Shaw, professor at the University of Kansas and Executive Director of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. She is former associate editor of the *Tallassee Democrat* and editor and publisher of the *Coffeyville Journal*. She has served as news adviser and general manager of the Daily Kansan, the school's graduate adviser and associate dean of the school.

Deb Wenger, associate professor at the University of Mississippi who worked in local television news for 17 years, as assistant news director at WFLA-TV in Tampa and as executive producer at WSOC-TV, in Charlotte, N.C. She also serves as a newscast consultant for Media General Broadcast Group.

Owen Youngman, Knight Professor of Digital Media Strategy at Northwestern University Knight Chair in Digital Media Strategy at Medill in January, 2009, after a 37-year career at the Chicago Tribune focused on new product development, innovation, and interactive media. He is also the associate director of the Northwestern Center for Innovation in Technology, Media and Journalism. He held newsroom positions including deputy sports editor, associate metropolitan editor/suburban news, associate features editor, associate managing editor/financial news and managing editor/features.





### **Will Norton, Jr.**

Will Norton, Jr., is dean of the Meek School of Journalism and New Media. He was dean of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln from August 1990 until July 2009. He served as president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (2000-2001) and as president of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communications (1989 to 1990).

He was vice president of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications and is vice chair of the Accrediting Committee of ACEJMC. He has made more than 70 campus visits as a consultant, a member or chair of site teams of ACEJMC or a state board program evaluator.

In April 2005, Norton was named Journalism Administrator of the Year by the Scripps Howard Foundation. Its National Journalism Awards ceremony honors the best in print, Web and electronic journalism and journalism education

Norton has written articles for publication in journals and popular magazines, has ghost written three books and directed funded research for a dozen newspapers. His travels have taken him to 50 nations.

Norton is a partner in ownership of The South Reporter, Inc., Holly Springs, Miss., a corporation that publishes two newspapers and a total market publication. He was publisher of *The Daily Iowan*. He previously was managing editor of Christian Life publications, was on the staff of the *Chicago Tribune* and was sports editor of *The Daily Journal*, Wheaton, Illinois. Norton is a trustee of The Freedom Forum and the Newseum.

He was graduated from the University of Iowa with a PhD in Mass Communications. Among his other degrees are an MA in mass communications from Indiana University and a BA with honors in history from Wheaton College.

## **10 Tips for Balancing Teaching, Research, Service and Life—While Meeting Promotion and Tenure Expectations, Being Productive (and Being Happy) in Academe**

❧ By **Doug Anderson**

Navigating the tenure track successfully and then continuing to grow and flourish in academe can be stressful—even though many institutions have tried to take some of the tension and uncertainty out of it.

Having said that, I recognize that the system can be viewed through different lenses: through those of junior faculty members, senior faculty members and administrators. I've looked at it through all of those lenses—but for the last 24 years through administrative eyes.

Naturally, I've always been aware of the varying perceptions—but let me cite an anecdote to illustrate legitimately different takes on how well the tenure system works and how much apprehension it creates.

After my first five years in the College of Communications at Penn State, we had considered 12 individuals for promotion to associate professor with tenure. Ten of them were successful, and the two who were not stopped at my desk. (At Penn State, if the dean says no—as long as at least one previous level of review said no—the decision stands.)

The summer after my fifth year we held our annual executive committee retreat. One of our young department heads—during the roundtable at the end of the retreat—said there was heightened “uncertainty, confusion and apprehension” among junior faculty about the tenure system.

I replied: “I understand that; there always will be. But if you look at this clinically, why would the level of apprehensiveness be rising when 10 of our last 12 candidates have been successful?”

Those numbers told me the system worked pretty well.

But the department head replied: “Most young faculty members don't look at it from the standpoint that 10 of the 12 were successful. They look at it from the standpoint that two of the last four were not.”

Stress can be lessened, though, if professors understand the system that they are going through and if they work at an institution where expectations fit their personal skills, talents, philosophies and comfort zones.

Stress is diminished considerably—and the chances of short- intermediate- and long-term success are significantly enhanced—when there is a good fit between the professor and the institution.

Here are my 10 tips for balancing work, life and expectations.

1. ***Accept a position at an institution where you understand the expectations, you are comfortable with the culture and your credentials are a good fit.*** If, for example, you struggled much harder than your colleagues in graduate school to produce convention papers or publishable articles, you might not be a good fit—or be happy—at an institution with rigorous research expectations.
2. ***Accept a position at an institution that has a firm probationary period with clear written expectations in place—one that provides meaty annual reviews and at least one detailed and comprehensive assessment prior to your sixth-year review.*** Make sure you, your chair, dean or director and senior faculty committees are on the same page. Be realistic—and assume personal responsibility for not allowing the process to be a mystery.
3. ***Find a colleague with whom you feel comfortable—and make sure that he or she has adjusted to the institution and fully understands its culture and expectations.*** It does no good to get advice from disgruntled faculty members who live on the edge.
4. ***Pay little or no attention to rumors—and steer away from trolling the hallways to get a dozen different opinions about, for example, promotion and tenure expectations.*** Go directly to a decision maker who can give you an informed straight answer. It will save you time and mental anguish.
5. ***Recognize that you are unique—and that you will be judged on your record.*** I'm always disappointed when a faculty member tells me: "I was frightened and terribly apprehensive" during the process. He or she might say something like: "Joe Jones didn't get tenure two years ago—and that sent a scary message." Significantly more often than not—in fact, probably always—Joe Jones had a record that bore absolutely no resemblance to the person who was feeling vulnerable because Joe Jones was denied tenure. Look at the record— and be realistic.
6. ***Keep multiple projects in the pipeline—whether it is research, teaching or service.*** That's the only way to keep pushing forward and maintaining constant momentum.
7. ***Be a good citizen.*** Say "yes"—with enthusiasm—to all reasonable requests for unit or discipline service. It is a myth, for example, that building strong research records is possible only if you negotiate reduced teaching or service loads. Productive people are productive—regardless of concomitant responsibilities.

8. ***Set realistic goals and priorities.*** Don't use a scattergun—or scatterbrain— approach.
9. ***Manage your time wisely.*** Some professors get more done in two hours than others do in two weeks because they know how to establish priorities and manage their time.
10. ***Be yourself.*** Have confidence—and faith—in your abilities. Assume personal responsibility for not only meeting, but exceeding, expectations.



**Douglas A. Anderson** has served since July 1999 as professor of journalism and dean of the College of Communications at The Pennsylvania State University, the country's largest nationally accredited program. Prior to that, he was Cronkite Endowment Board of Trustees Professor and director of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Telecommunication at Arizona State University. He is author or co-author of six books, two of which have gone into subsequent editions: *A "Washington Merry-Go-Round" of Libel Actions*, *Contemporary Sports Reporting* (in its second edition), *Electronic Age News Editing*, *Contemporary News Reporting*, *News Writing and Reporting for Today's Media* (in its seventh edition) and *Writing the News*. He also has written more than 75 academic articles, papers, book chapters and workbooks.

Anderson earned a Ph.D. in journalism from Southern Illinois University, where he was a graduate fellow. He has been cited for excellence in teaching by the Modern Media Institute (now the Poynter Institute for Media Studies) and the Associated Press Managing Editors. Anderson, a former daily newspaper reporter, sports editor and managing editor, is a past president of the Nebraska Associated Press Managing Editors Association. He also is a past president of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication and of the Southwest Education Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

He has been active in journalism-mass communications' accrediting process since 1990. He currently serves as vice president of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. Since 1990, he has chaired accrediting site-team visits to or conducted pre-accreditation visits to some 45 universities.

He serves also as chair of the steering committee of the Journalism Awards Program of the William Randolph Hearst Foundation. In 1996, The Freedom Forum named him Journalism Administrator of the Year, the youngest person ever to receive the award. He served on the faculty at Arizona State from 1979 to 1999.

## Proven Ways to Flourish in Academe

❖ By Chris Roush

1. **Avoid campus politics.** Never have the battles been so fierce about things so unimportant. Pick your battles carefully and rarely.
2. **Enjoy what you do.** If you don't like what you're teaching, writing or researching, then you're in the wrong business. If you can change one of those to make yourself happier, do so as soon as possible.
3. **Keep work and family separate.** I try to avoid taking grading home with me. I only try to work at home when everybody else is doing something as well, like homework.
4. **Don't work with assholes.** You know who they are on your faculty and staff. It's not worth the hassle in dealing with them. If you have a bad experience working with someone, don't work with them again.
5. **Find your niche.** A successful academic career means becoming an expert in a specific area. Find yours, and then focus exclusively on that area. Don't jump around. It makes your CV look bad.
6. **Take mental breaks.** If you work too hard or focus too long on one thing, it becomes difficult to finish. Take 15- to 30-minute breaks and do something totally different.
7. **Budget your time carefully.** Don't overschedule yourself with meetings when you're not teaching. That's your time to work on what you want to work on.
8. **Exercise regularly.** Physical health keeps your mentally on top and improves your writing. Walk around campus or find the gyms on campus.
9. **Find a good editor.** Nobody writes perfect the first, second or third time. Find someone else on the faculty who is a good editor and can improve your work.
10. **Do favors without being asked.** Help colleagues who are sick by teaching their classes. Give them your kids' hand-me-down clothes for their kids. Fill out their students' questionnaires. You never know when you'll need their help some day.
11. **Go outside your school.** Faculty at other schools on campus can sometimes be better sounding boards because they don't know what's the norm in your field.
12. **Guard your reputation.** Your work should speak for itself. A national reputation is more important than making sure your colleagues know your successes.



### **Professor Chris Roush,**

Walter E. Hussman Sr. Distinguished Scholar  
Director, Carolina Business News Initiative

Chris Roush is founding director of the Carolina Business News Initiative, which provides training for professional journalists and students at UNC-Chapel Hill. He is also director of the master's program at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

In 2010, he was named Journalism Teacher of the Year by the Scripps Howard Foundation and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. The judges noted that Roush "has become the expert in business journalism -- not just at Chapel Hill, but throughout the country and even in other parts of the world."

He is the author of two books about business journalism – "Show Me the Money: Writing Business and Economics Stories for Mass Communication" (second edition, 2010) and "Profits and Losses: Business Journalism and its Role in Society" (2006). He is the co-author of "The Financial Writer's Stylebook: 1,100 Business Terms Defined and Rated" (2010).

Roush has been quoted about business journalism in publications such as The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today and American Journalism Review and has written about business journalism in Columbia Journalism Review and American Journalism Review.

He blogs about business journalism at [www.talkingbiznews.com](http://www.talkingbiznews.com), which won a Society of American Business Editors and Writers "Best in Business" award in March 2010. He has also created a website on the history of business journalism at [www.bizjournalismhistory.org](http://www.bizjournalismhistory.org) and a website for college students interested in business journalism at [www.collegebizjournalism.org](http://www.collegebizjournalism.org).

Roush has led business journalism training sessions for media organizations such as the Associated Press, Reuters, The Motley Fool, Media General newspapers, The Orlando Sentinel, The Mobile Register, the South Carolina Press Association, the International Center for Journalists and newspapers throughout North Carolina. He has also worked with media outlets and universities in South Africa to improve business journalism in that country.

He is author or co-author of books about Home Depot (1999), Pacific Coast Feather Co. (2006), Alex Lee Inc. (2006) and Progress Energy (2009). He has also taught business journalism at Washington & Lee University and the University of Richmond.

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## Top 10

❧ By **Gail F. Baker**

1. Know When to Say “**No**”
2. Understand the culture of ***your*** campus
3. You have to do it; but it might not count
4. Don’t forget about applied research
5. Focus on the end goal
6. Research your research
7. Mentors DO matter
8. Avoid departmental politics—at ALL cost
9. Position your portfolio
10. Remember why you chose this profession



Dr. Gail F. Baker is currently dean of the College of Communications Fine Arts and Media at the University of Nebraska Omaha.

Prior to joining UNO, she held numerous leadership positions at the University of Florida, including Vice President for Public Relations; director of communications and chair of the Public Relations Department in the College of Journalism and Communications. She joined the University of Florida in 1995, after a four-year stint as chair of the Advertising Department at the University of Missouri-Columbia, where she also served as the director of the school's Knight Foundation Office of Minority Recruiting and Retention. An accredited member of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), Dr. Baker is also a member of its College of Fellows, a distinction reserved for practitioners who have demonstrated the highest achievements within the profession.

Dr. Baker holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, a Master of Science degree in Marketing Communications from Roosevelt University and a doctorate in Journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Her industry experience includes positions with IBM and International Harvester (now Navistar). She was a reporter and editor for the Chicago Daily Defender Newspaper.

In 2006, Dr. Baker won an Emmy Award for Excellence in Documentary Writing for “Paper Trail: 100 Years of the Chicago Daily Defender,” which aired on the Chicago PBS affiliate WTTW. She has also received awards for teaching and scholarship.

## Ten Tips for Teaching

❖ By **Maria B. Marron**

1. Locate yourself in an environment where you can enjoy your life and in a program where your colleagues will be collegial and supportive.
2. Gauge the teaching and learning culture in the program: Work in a culture where the students are likely to share your values and appreciate the discipline of learning.
3. Become a master or a mistress of content, knowing that there may be as many questions as there are answers in your discipline.
4. Listen carefully and learn from your colleagues, your students and others, particularly as you are starting out. Remember that a listener learns a lot; a talker may do little learning.
5. Understand the big picture of your discipline, i.e., journalism/mass communications education and of your particular program: Do not sweat the small stuff.
6. Strive to achieve balance—in your life, in teaching, research and service, the pillars of the Academy.
7. Do what you need to do, and that is not always the same as what you want to do—to prepare for class, to liaise with your students (remember that unless you set boundaries, students can erode ALL of your time!), to do research . . .
8. Be the best instructor that you can be and hold to your values. Remember that being the best you can be is not the same as being the most popular instructor, the most technologically sophisticated instructor and so on.
9. Have empathy with your students. Know that many will work two or three jobs in order to pay for college; know that they do not know everything. They are in your class to learn. If they did not want to or need to learn, they would not be there.
10. Make your classroom a place where students want to be. Communicate your love of learning and how serious you are about the value of learning, but have fun. Enjoy!



## **Maria B. Marron**



Maria B. Marron is professor and chair of the Department of Journalism at Central Michigan University.

The immediate past president of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication, she has served over the years on various committees of ASJMC. She is a member of the national Hearst Intercollegiate Journalism Awards Steering Committee. She has chaired the International Communication Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and has been an officer in various divisions of AEJMC, including the Commission on the Status of Women.

She holds a doctorate in journalism and mass communication from Ohio University. She has a master's in journalism from The Ohio State University, and a bachelor's in English, Latin and French as well as a postgraduate diploma in education from University College Dublin, Ireland. She worked in journalism and public relations in Ireland and in journalism in the United States.

Before assuming her current position at CMU, she served in administrative capacities at University College Dublin, Ireland, where she was director of MBA Programmes, the Smurfit Graduate School of Business, and at Zayed University, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where she was a member of the planning team for the new College of Communication and Media Sciences, and assistant dean.

She has taught at The Ohio State University, Texas State University-San Marcos and Central Michigan University. Her research interests include investigative journalism with a specific emphasis on the British Isles, ethics, law, and international communication.

## Strategies to Balance Research, Teaching, and Service Commitments

By Linda Aldoory

1. **Stop trying to “balance,” as there is no such thing!** The best-kept secret is that no one truly attains balance (even though some people are good at looking and acting as if they do!). *Acknowledging and accepting the unpredictable, yet 24-7 nature* of the academic profession and the erratic swings during the year between research and teaching emphases *is the first step to healing*.
2. **While somewhat boring, repeating the same course is good for the balanced soul.** This strategy is actually two in one. First, teaching the same courses two or more semesters in a row may be boring, but it decreases your teaching prep time and thus allows for greater time devoted to research and service. The pedagogical advantage is an obvious one: you also have the chance to improve on weaknesses in your curriculum and teaching over time.
3. **Create research out of your teaching and course curriculum.** There are several ways to do this. One way is to develop and evaluate innovative teaching tools or use of new media in your classroom, and then write up the evaluation and submit to AEJMC conference or to a publication. Another way is to conduct research for clients who are used in courses, and with client collaboration and approval, submit the research for conference/publication. You might also collaborate with teams of students in a research that allows the students not only research experience and conference paper submissions, but also course credit.
4. **Consider your learning curve when you make changes to your course curricula.** If you significantly increase your hours of prep time for a course, you decrease the time you have to spend on research. Wait until you have the time: over the summer or through an instructional grant that buys your time, or create a research project out of your exploration so that you combine a teaching goal with a research one.
5. **Develop mentoring relationships even with teachers outside your unit.** Take the person to lunch once a month or once a semester. Ask questions: What can I do to make my research more valuable to the university and the discipline? What should I be doing that I am not doing to better balance teaching, research, and service? What does the unit expect for promotion? What type of service is expected?
6. **Be a detective: learn the unwritten rules for research.** There are several factors in institutional research expectations that can increase or relieve a sense of your burden when attempting to balance research, teaching and service. For example, your university may “rank”: sole-authored publications over co-authored works; SSI ranked journals over all others; mainstream journals over a sub-discipline’s outlets; print journals over electronic-only outlets; etc. Many of these “rules” are unwritten.
7. **Do what you have to do to get tenure; then do what you love.** While this is a sobering sentiment, it is a realistic reflection of how to consider balancing research, teaching, and service. Depending on your institution and its emphasis, spend the hours on what is valuable to the institution and your academic unit. This does not mean that you cannot study what is important to you or that you have to give up innovative teaching ideas. It means that the hours spent on such endeavors might have to be aligned with institutional expectations.
8. **Select service duties that have limited “out of class” work.** While it may seem like a certain service obligation has too many meetings, the total number of hours could be significantly less than a search committee, for example, that meets only twice officially, but then you need to spend hours and hours of your own time reading dozens of job applications.

9. **Calculate hours of work rather than measures of “prestige.”** Some service positions are hard to say no to, because they are perceived as prestigious or are labeled “chair” of a popular committee. However, these service positions might take up a significant portion of your time yet still take up exactly the same amount of space on your CV as all other service activities do—two printed lines under the heading of service.
10. **Network when conducting services with those who may have to vote on your tenure or promotion.** College- or university-level service introduces you to other faculty members of varying ranks who may one day impact your future.



Linda Aldoory is the Endowed Director and Chair of the Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy and an associate professor in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health at the University of Maryland. She has been an AEJMC member since 1996. Her commitment to teaching has been honored through a Lilly Fellowship for Teaching Excellence and a fellowship in the Academy for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Aldoory has spearheaded curriculum reform: she developed and taught new courses in health communication, media studies, campaigns, and in public relations. Aldoory has published pedagogical studies, regarding graduate curriculum (*PR Review*) and clients of undergraduate courses (*JE&MC Educator*). Aldoory is on the AEJMC President’s Strategic Plan Implementation Committee as well as the Teaching Standards Committee, and was chair of AEJMC’s former Committee for Gender and Race Equity and Diversity Assessment. She was on the founding selection committee for the new AEJMC Equity and Diversity Award. She was formerly research chair for the Commission on the Status of Women, and editor of the *Journal of Public Relations Research*. Aldoory’s research has appeared in *JE&MC Quarterly*, *Journal of Communication*, and *Health Communication*. Her PhD is from Syracuse University and her master’s is from the University of Texas at Austin.

## Top 10 Tips for Flourishing in Academe

❧ By Fred Blevens

For all faculty, the future of higher education is perilous. A majority of citizens for the first time are questioning the value of what we do, while state legislatures make us high-profile pawns in budget-cutting shell games. The age-old debate over tenure has hit a pitch never seen before and students and parents raise voices ever louder over escalating tuition.

These external forces are pushing us to our limits internally – salary freezes and furloughs, larger classes and fewer resources, more adjuncts and fewer tenure lines, We are at war with the outside world as we struggle to figure out how to downsize, restructure, realign, merge or fold.

Amid these concurrent and synergistic crises, faculty are eager to know how to find new enrichment strategies and better opportunities in an environment that inspires and ignites aspirations. Here are 10 ways to help faculty find place and confront challenge without compromising real life and the soul.

1. Look for a school that fits you, not one that demands you conform to it. Remember, you'll be spending more waking hours with students, colleagues and administrators than you will with any significant other. Be as careful selecting your place as you are about selecting your life mate. Remember, too, that your bosses will have big voices in promotion and tenure decisions, so finding that fit should pay dividends for a long time.
2. University programs once were bastions of stability. Once there, you could find comfort and accrue happiness in a steady and predictable workplace. Not anymore. Some predict that those entering higher education today may move multiple times. Be ready for that. Always keep your eyes on places that look like the next logical step in your career and spend time at conferences cultivating relationships at those schools.
3. Think deeply about negotiating a tenure position over a contract position. Though the debate over tenure won't end soon, the trends certainly portend a continuing decline in tenure-track lines. Under current circumstances, a contract might offer you as much flexibility as it does your school and being a colleague in a growth segment might be better than being in one in a downward spiral.
4. Any school serious about faculty development will be serious about mentoring. Sometimes, it occurs in a structured environment, but mostly it requires great initiative in a loosely defined framework. Approach a senior faculty member who shares your passion but has strengths that play to your weaknesses.
5. Be on constant lookout for transdisciplinary opportunities that cut across the university landscape, not just the multiple disciplines in your school. Faculty who

continue to live exclusively in the journalism-mass communication silo probably will not survive. The more capital you build outside of your school, the more security you build in these tenuous times.

6. The office can be the worst place to do research. If you're not teaching or don't have office hours, stay away from the office. Go to the library. Work at home. Manage your research time and devote sufficient time each week.
7. When your chair or dean asks you to take on new service obligations, ask this question: "How is this going to be counted in my annual evaluation or my progress toward tenure and promotion?" Bosses assign so much service that they often forget they've already given you too many assignments. If that doesn't work, refer to No. 2, the tip on moving.
8. Administrators more and more emphasize the idea of doing more with less. They have little choice, given funding circumstances, but that doesn't mean you need to do more if you're working at or over capacity. Ask your chair or dean what that philosophy means for your future. A more for less approach requires equal consideration on the research and service sides.
9. Universities now consider students to be "customers" who always come first and usually are assumed to be right when they complain. With the emergence of the "entitled generation," that business approach can create huge headaches for faculty. Most students, of course, see little relationship between school and Home Depot, but some will use this model to full advantage. You have an obligation to give students access to your knowledge and advice, but you are not compelled to accommodate any student demand just because the student is paid up in tuition.
10. Your public life is only as rich as your private life. Never feel ashamed or guilty about taking your own time seriously. Go to the beach or the mountains. Travel abroad. Learn to cook. Go fishing or play golf. Being successful in higher education is serious business – and it's immensely important – but it is not as important as maintaining your sanity and health.



Fred Blevens is a professor and Honors Fellow at Florida International University. From 2002 to 2006, he was associate dean and professor in the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Oklahoma, where he founded the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism.

Prior to that, he was chair and professor in the Department of Mass Communication at Texas State University, an assistant professor in the Department of Journalism at Texas A&M University and an instructor in the Department of Journalism at Ball State University, where he earned both the bachelor's and master's. He holds the doctorate from the University of Missouri.

Dr. Blevens is the co-author of "Twilight of Press Freedom," a philosophical critique of the civic and public journalism movements. He is the author or co-author of six book chapters, several dozen journal articles and numerous articles on media criticism in mainstream and specialized publications, including the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, the *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *American Journalism*, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. He was co-editor of a special issue of the journal *American Journalism* on the history of investigative journalism. His most recent work, "Arming the Audience," is an essay on best teaching practices in news literacy, published in *Page One: Inside the New York Times and the Future of Journalism*, the companion book to the documentary of the same name.

In 2006, he served as president of the American Journalism Historians Association and an elected term on the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication between 2006 and 2009. In 2000, he was president of the Southwest Education Council for Journalism and Mass Communication. He currently serves as vice chair of the Council of Communication Associations. He also is chair of FIU's campuswide University Graduate Council.

During the past 25 years, Dr. Blevens has served on the faculty of 35 Dow Jones High School Workshops for minority students. He was a founding faculty member of one Dow Jones workshop in San Antonio and founded a second at the University of Oklahoma. For the past four years, he has co-directed a third Dow Jones session, the Peace Sullivan/James Ansin High School Workshop in Journalism and New Media at the University of Miami.

In fall 2009, Dr. Blevens launched an honors class in news literacy, a yearlong course that is pioneering the first attempt to move news literacy training into the community. At the same time, he piloted a global learning general education course called "How We Know What We Know," a class that exposes FIU freshmen and sophomores to the principles and practices of global information literacy. Both classes now are offered each year at FIU.

In 1995, Dr. Blevens was named the Outstanding Faculty member in the Department of Journalism at Texas A&M University and in 2001, he was a Freedom Forum National Teacher of the Year. Prior to earning his doctorate, Dr. Blevens was a reporter, copyeditor and senior editor at the *Tampa Tribune*, *Philadelphia Bulletin*, *San Antonio Light*, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* and *Houston Chronicle*.

## Using Technology Inside and Outside the Classroom to Enrich the Learning Experience

❖ By **Lori Clithero**, Apple Inc.

In 2001, I joined Apple in the education division working in higher education. I had spent about 14 years in the technology sector working with enterprise, government and education entities.

However, this job was my first one focused on education from the perspective of teaching, learning and research.

The University of Missouri was my largest opportunity, and my alma mater. As a lifelong Missourian and lifelong learner I wanted Mizzou to be an innovative, creative school - much along the lines of the way we think of Ivy League Schools from the East and West Coast.

The crux of the solution was the Missouri School of Journalism. Always the crowning achievement at Mizzou, but feeling the need to re-energize and redefine the solid Walter Williams Method - learn by doing. It is the process by which the MSJ moved from a largely windows based environment to an all Apple oriented program that has evolved today to include a vast array of mobile solutions and environments in which students work, learn, create and consume content.

A wonderful video chronicling their story can be found here:

<http://www.apple.com/education/profiles/missouri/#video-missouri>

The important part of the story isn't that Missouri chose Apple. The important part of the story is that the entire faculty and leadership got behind a new way to teach and learn journalism.

In 2002, the journalists backpack was their office. Today, they can carry their office in a pocket.

In Daniel Pink's A Whole New Mind book, he discusses how we are moving from a society and economy that relies on linear, logical, computer-like capabilities (Information Age) to a society and economy built on inventive, empathic, big-picture capabilities which he dubs the Conceptual Age.

A Whole New Mind | Daniel H. Pink:

<http://www.danpink.com/whole-new-mind>

Finally, how is journalism defined today? As of 16 February 2011, there were over 156 million public blogs in existence.<sup>13</sup>

^ “[BlogPulse](#)”. The Nielsen Company. February 16, 2011. Retrieved 2011-02-17.

Everybody is a “journalist”. Moore's law tells us that technology performance doubles every 2 years.

Information is doubling at an exponential rate equivalent to or faster than Moore's law. The number of bloggers is over 156M and growing. Keeping up with students changing expectations, technological and information changes is a huge job. Learning anytime, anywhere, fostering curious learners, developing critical thinkers, creators and consumers of content - utilizing the mobile and social tools that are in our students hands at all times is the key to creating a rich, rewarding learning environment for yourself and your students.

So my hypothesis is the following:

1. The traditional learning environment is gone. 2. The US MUST change in order to stay competitive and education can be the key driver. 3. In an age where everybody is a journalist, how is journalism defined?

Some ideas for a new learning environment:

1. Change the way you think about the classroom. Allow students to consume a lecture or talk prior to class - make that the homework - time shifting the lecture is something all students want (Khan Academy <http://www.khanacademy.org/>)

2. Assess before class - use assessment information to glean what students know and understand to drive the discussion



Lori Clithero has 25 years experience in the technology sector working with enterprise, government and education entities. She has consulted extensively with companies like Monsanto, Anheuser Busch and Toyota Motor Company to create online, interactive, competency based learning solutions for their employees. For the last 10 years she has represented Apple, Inc focused on higher education. She specializes in redefining and reshaping the teaching/learning and research environment on campus through the thoughtful application of technology. This includes bringing key thought leaders together from IT, Education Technology and the academic units in order to meet the comprehensive needs of the university or college. Lori earned her BS in Business from the University of Missouri and her MBA from Saint Louis University.

**Ms. Lori Clithero, Apple Inc**



## Ms. Lori Clithero recommended this reading:

“Narrate, Curate, Share.” How Blogging Can Catalyze Learning -- Campus Technology:  
<http://campustechnology.com/articles/2011/08/10/how-blogging-can-catalyze-learning.aspx>

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Blogging | Viewpoint

### 'Narrate, Curate, Share': How Blogging Can Catalyze Learning

- By W. Gardner Campbell
- 08/10/11

As I talk at colleges and universities across the country about the blogging initiatives I've led at the University of Mary Washington, Baylor University, and now at Virginia Tech, my audiences consistently ask about several issues. FERPA is one. Grading is another. But the fundamental questions have to do with the nature and value of the activity itself. What is blogging? Is it like an online journal? If so, how is a public journal of *academic* value? Should I give my students prompts? Will they think this is merely busy work? Should their blogs be about work done in specific classes, work done in several classes, work done outside of class, or all of the above?

These are all perfectly legitimate questions. And while I cannot always articulate my intuitions about the value of particular learning experiences or teaching strategies, I have come up with a conceptual framework that explains what I believe to be the core elements--and the essential worth--of a blogging initiative, either within a course or across an entire program. I've built the framework out of three imperatives: “Narrate, Curate, Share.” I believe these three imperatives underlie some of the most important aspects of an educated citizen's contributions to the human record. And in my experience, blogging offers a uniquely powerful way of becoming a self-aware learner in the process of making those contributions.

“Narrate, Curate, Share” is the framework in place for the upcoming fall semester as the Virginia Tech Center for Innovation in Learning partners with Tech's new Honors Residential College to bring 21st-century innovation to the tradition of residential learning with a program-wide blogging initiative. Our goal is to enrich each student's individual learning, as well as to help the living-learning example of the Honors Residential College to influence and inspire the entire university. We wanted the rich individuality of each student's voice to be able to sound within a networked conversation that could scale across many contexts. “Narrate, Curate, Share” gave us the framework we needed to conceptualize and articulate these goals.

“Narrate, Curate, Share” is the framework in place for the upcoming fall semester as the Virginia Tech Center for Innovation in Learning partners with Tech's new Honors Residential College to bring 21st-century innovation to the tradition of residential learning with a program-wide blogging initiative. Our goal is to enrich each student's individual learning, as well as to help the living-learning example of the Honors Residential College to influence and inspire the entire university. We wanted the rich individuality of each student's voice to be able to sound within a networked conversation that could scale across many contexts. “Narrate, Curate, Share” gave us the framework we needed to conceptualize and articulate these goals.

Here's how we've explained these three imperatives to the honors students themselves:

**Narrate.** Blogs are stories. Your posts tell the story of your learning. *By telling that story, you're actually reinforcing your learning.* Research shows that when people “think aloud” about what they're doing as they're doing it, they remember the information longer and attain mastery faster. As you blog, think



of yourself as a storyteller, and don't overlook the details that make your story rich, exciting, and above all, *your story*. The story of your learning will include the work you're doing in the classroom, sure, but it will also include the informal discussions you have outside the classroom as you interact with your professors, your fellow students, and with all the members of the Virginia Tech community--and beyond.

**Curate.** To curate your stories is to go up yet another “meta” level, where you think about the larger story of the life's work you're building as a student at Virginia Tech. To be a good curator is to take pride in the elements of your blog and to think about the way your larger story comes across to readers. Just as a good museum curator arranges exhibits to draw the visitor in and heighten his or her experience, the good blog curator thinks about how to shape his or her blog and its contents to add value and interest to the reader's experience, and to the entire learning community. The result is a more comprehensive awareness of yourself as a learner and creator. You'll also be exploring the transformative possibilities of becoming a true “digital citizen.”

**Share.** In *Where Good Ideas Come From*, Steven Johnson takes Pasteur's maxim that “chance favors the prepared mind” and revises it for the 21st century: “chance favors the connected mind.” Sharing means finding and creating connections. It means creating a “serendipity field” that brings new opportunities for learning and creativity. Don't just wait for the world to come to you. Look for creative ways to get the word out about your blog, about the blogs in your Colloquium, or your other courses, or your residence hall. Network thyself! See “[Amazing Tales Of Openness](#)” for examples of the wonderful things that can result. You'll soon have your own amazing tales to contribute.

**A Final Word.** In his essay “How Blogging Changed Everything,” Scott Rosenberg challenges us to think anew about the purposes of education: “It's a mistake to think of human creativity as a kind of limited natural resource, like an ore waiting for society to mine; it is more like a gene that will turn on given the right cues.” The Honors Residential College's blogging initiative seeks to help you turn on that gene and lift your learning to a whole new level. So narrate, curate, and share. Participate in what Rosenberg calls “a new kind of public sphere, at once ephemeral and timeless, sharing the characteristics of conversation and deliberation.” Your readers await!

[Editor's note: For further reading, see “[The Reverend Asked Me A Question](#)”]

About the Author

W. Gardner Campbell is Director of Professional Development and Innovative Initiatives in the Division of Learning Technologies at Virginia Tech.

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Celebrations in Chicago in 2012!

